

*Pharmacopornographic Subjectivity*  
*in the Work of Paul B. Preciado*

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## Abstract

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This thesis examines ‘pharmacopornographic’ subjectivity in the work of contemporary Spanish philosopher, Paul B. Preciado, and represents the first extended study of his work. In Preciado’s writing, ‘pharmacopornographic’ describes the entwined influence and dominance of the pharmaceutical and pornographic industries, and the thesis analyses how they produce ‘pharmacopornographic’ subjects. This thesis explores Preciado’s writing on gender, sexuality, pornography, drugs and power between 2002 and 2014 and articulates an emergent trans-feminism.

This research analyses how pharmacological and pornographic industries affect the design and production of genders and subjectivities. The thesis further refines Preciado’s assertion that contemporary, ‘pharmacopornographic’ regimes of power produce subjects rather than objects, or people, rather than things. Ultimately, this research is concerned with understanding the production of pharmacologically-determined subjectivity. The thesis articulates various subject positions, as a means of theorising pharmacopornographic subjectivity: ‘The Voyeur’, ‘The Sex Worker’, ‘The Biodrag King’ and ‘The Junkie’. These subject-position chapters are prefaced with a chapter exploring theoretical frameworks used to analyse Preciado’s work, and the thesis concludes with a chapter on accelerationism and the microprosthetic scale of *Testo Junkie*.

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## Introduction

‘Feminism is about the sciences of the multiple subject with (at least) double vision’,  
Donna Haraway (1988, p. 589).

This thesis examines ‘pharmacopornographic’ subjectivity in the work of Spanish philosopher, Paul B. Preciado, and represents the first extended study of his work. In Preciado’s writing, ‘pharmacopornographic’ describes the entwined influence and dominance of the pharmaceutical and pornographic industries; here, I analyse how these industries produce ‘pharmacopornographic’ subjects. Accordingly, this thesis explores Preciado’s writing on gender, sexuality, pornography, drugs and power between 2000 and 2014 and articulates a new trans-feminism.

Preciado is a contemporary writer, working on gender, sexuality, pornography, architecture and histories of the body. He studied for an MA at The New School for Social Research, where he worked with Ágnes Heller and Jacques Derrida. After his Masters, Preciado completed a PhD in architecture at Princeton: ‘Gender, Sexuality, and the Biopolitics of Architecture: From the Secret Museum to Playboy’, part of which was published as *Pornotopia* in 2014. Preciado published *Manifiesto Contrasexual* in 2002 (also translated into French and forthcoming in English), and *Testo Yonqi*, his most recent text, in 2008 (translated into both French and English). Most recently, Preciado was Professor of Gender Theory at Université Paris VIII, directed a research programme at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona, and worked as a curator and director for documenta 14 – an art festival in Kassel and Athens. Preciado previously identified as a lesbian woman and, later, non-binary; in 2015, Preciado changed his name from Beatriz to Paul Beatriz and now identifies as a transgender man. He writes of his name change: ‘Lorsqu’on disait “elle” pour me qualifier, c’était une blessure, alors j’ai décidé de changer de nom. Aujourd’hui, chaque fois que quelqu’un m’appelle Paul, c’est un acte de coopération qui devient un acte de résistance politique’ (2015).

Preciado’s *Manifiesto Contrasexual* (2013) is an exploration of sadomasochism, dildos and sexuality, featuring drawings and sexual contracts. Preciado’s later two books focus on his theorisation of ‘pharmacopornography’, and the interaction between

pharmacology and pornography in the construction of subjectivity. *Pornotopia* analyses architecture, architectural embodiment and the history of modern pornography. *Testo Junkie* combines critical theory, philosophy and experimental narrative in an examination of the effects, and affects, of testosterone. Preciado's narrative in the latter is also auto-experimental: he takes 'Testogel' (testosterone gel) illicitly, rather than as a 'medicine' for gender dysphoria, and observes and notes the resultant bodily changes; his narrative is interspersed with theory relating to gender and sexual politics, pornography and contemporary drugs. *Testo Junkie* also depicts Preciado mourning his friend, Guillaume Dustan, and beginning a relationship with his (now former) partner, Virginie Despentes.

### **Critical background, terminology and approach**

*Testo Junkie* contributes to the genre of trans-memoir exemplified by Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw* (1994) or Julia Serano's *Whipping Girl* (2007). But *Testo Junkie* also explores histories of medical technologies and their contribution to pharmacopornography and subjectivity, demonstrating historical scope akin to Susan Stryker's *Transgender History* (2008). Preciado writes about how we construct body 'fictions', or narratives through various prostheses – including, for example, Ritalin, Viagra, dildos or contraceptives (p. 12). Preciado insists on our collective complicity in pharmacopornography, emphasises the materiality of trans bodies, explores the colonial history of modern contraceptives, and writes vivid messy sex scenes. Preciado's voice alternates between teasing, playful, mournful and assertively theoretical. *Testo Junkie* also negotiates crucial movements in queer theory: the text explores mourning and grief, and, simultaneously, the exciting, confusing possibility of taking testosterone and re-shaping bodies. Preciado embeds himself in queer theories negating reproduction, following Lee Edelman, as well as exemplifying hopeful queer futurity, following José Esteban Muñoz. In sum, *Testo Junkie* represents a fresh, rich, assertively contradictory contribution to trans-feminist theory.

Although Preciado's work has never been explored at this length before, a number of writers have engaged with his texts – mostly writing on *Testo Junkie*: Helen Hester, McKenzie Wark, Elliot Evans, Ann Pasek and Joshua Rivas are the main critical points of reference in the following thesis. Helen Hester's article, 'Synthetic Gender and the Limits of Micropolitics' examines Preciado's theory in relation to affirmations and criticisms of accelerationism (2015). Hester's most recent book on feminist accelerationism was

endorsed by Preciado, and Hester writes that Preciado's subjectivity experimentation inspired her elaboration of 'xenofeminism' (2018, p. 89). In a review of his work, Hester writes that Preciado's project might need to be 'scaled up', but also notes that *Testo Junkie* provides us with a 'meaningful vision for a potential technomaterialist feminist project' that recognises the body as a 'potential biological platform for experimentation with new identities and political subjectivities' (2015). In a Public Seminar article, McKenzie Wark analyses accelerationism, labour and reproduction in Preciado's work, and describes *Testo Junkie* as 'a little rough and raw, but brilliant' (2013).

Elliot Evans has engaged most thoroughly with Preciado's work, writing his PhD at King's College, London on Monique Wittig, Preciado and Guillaume Dustan, and writing for *Sexualities* on bareback sex in *Testo Junkie* and Dustan's work. Ann Pasek's blog on 'identity politics and French feminism' analyses Despentes, Preciado and Catherine Malabou and writes of the 'mutability of bodies as the key site of both subject formation and contestation in late capitalism' – Pasek explores material resistance exemplified by Malabou, Despentes and Preciado (2013). Pasek examines Preciado's theory as 'caught up in structures of violence', as he becomes 'drawn towards the position and privileges of hegemonic masculinity on a visual and hormonal level' (2013). Here, Pasek, partly by virtue of writing without knowledge of Preciado's later transition, configures trans-masculinity as violent and hegemonic. Joshua Rivas also writes on Preciado, in a book on literature and intoxication: Rivas analyses Preciado's work in relation to theories of addiction and intoxication – providing a helpful examination of the intersection of theory and narrative in *Testo Junkie* (2015).

The following arguments draw on and depart from these critics in various ways. In contrast to Hester, the discussion of accelerationism in the sixth chapter illustrates significant differences between *Testo Junkie* and contemporary accelerationist theory – in relation to, for example, mourning. Evans contributes to this thesis's analysis of permeability in Preciado's work, and influenced later analysis of the relationship between Dustan and Preciado. Following Pasek, the initial chapter on micropolitics examines Malabou's conception of plasticity in comparison with Preciado's writing on mutable bodies – but in significantly more detail. This chapter also establishes a body-plasticity not formulated in Malabou's writing and examines crucial differences between Malabou and Preciado's theory – for example, in relation to theorising resistance and complicity. In comparison with Pasek, this thesis asserts the difference between trans-masculinity and hegemonic masculinity. As Duke University Press describes Halberstam's book, *Female Masculinity*:

‘female masculinity is not some bad imitation of virility, but a lively and dramatic staging of hybrid and minority genders’ (1998). In comparison with Rivas, in a chapter on addiction, I explore how Preciado’s theoretical and narrative chapters function differently, specifically in order to function pornographically. I explore the textual landscape of *Testo Junkie* in relation to addiction, but I also analyse the role, or function, of the reader and examine *Testo Junkie* as a pornographic text.

But the following thesis also, for the first time, examines the elaboration of Preciado’s ‘pharmacopornography’ through an analysis of both *Pornotopia* and *Testo Junkie*, his two central texts, side-by-side. This thesis explores *Pornotopia*’s contribution to Preciado’s understanding of pharmacopornographic power, and the centrality of voyeurism to this conception. Vision, voyeurism and spaces, themes associated with Preciado’s background in architecture, are crucial to any analysis of pharmacopornography, but are mostly absent in previous examinations of his work. This thesis also analyses and further theorises ‘biodrag’, the under-elaborated but significant practical dimension of *Testo Junkie*, describing his use of Testogel. I explore sex work in Preciado’s writing, and his association of disciplinary power with cis-women and the pill. This thesis examines Preciado’s framework of addiction, and his identification with multiple addictive models. I analyse accelerationism’s nostalgia for power regimes and narratives which exclude bodies, and women’s bodies in particular, in comparison with Preciado’s work. Ultimately, here, I emphasise the materiality of gender, as well as sexuality, and use Preciado’s work to interrogate queer, feminist and trans theories, in order to map and define an emergent trans-feminism.

Preciado’s own work is itself influenced by, and in dialogue with, recent and contemporary writers, mostly from the domain of continental philosophy. Preciado engages primarily with Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Silvia Federici, and Donna Haraway, and various porn studies scholars.

Preciado is influenced by Foucault’s writing on power, and in particular, dispersed disciplinary power. Foucault writes in *Surveiller et punir* (1975): ‘la discipline ne peut s’identifier ni avec une institution ni avec un appareil; elle est un type de pouvoir, une modalité pour l’exercer, comportant tout un ensemble d’instruments, de techniques, de procédés, de niveaux d’application, de cibles; elle est une ‘physique’ ou une ‘anatomie’ du pouvoir, une technologie’ (p. 217). Preciado’s writing is concerned with this ‘anatomie’ of power, operating through numerous techniques and prostheses. Preciado is similarly influenced by Foucault’s conception of modern biopower, which he describes as an

‘explosion’ of ‘techniques diverses et nombreuses pour obtenir l’assujettissement des corps et le contrôle des populations’ (1992, p. 184). Disciplinary power acts to control behaviour and produce efficient workers; in comparison, biopower describes generalised power over bodies, for example, a society’s focus on ensuring a healthy population. Preciado describes a shift from disciplinary power and biopower into pharmacopornographic power, but he also describes how various power regimes persist and co-exist. For example, Preciado describes sex work through disciplinary power and population management, and Testogel through newer pharmaco-power. Preciado notes that the disciplinary regime established the female body as a ‘site of political intervention’, which persists in pharmacopornographic power (2018). Crucially, Preciado borrows from Foucault the framework of power regimes inventing bodies and subjectivities in order to sustain themselves: according to Preciado, pharmacopornography’s aim is the ‘invention of a subject and its global reproduction’ (p. 36).

Here, Preciado’s work is influenced by Foucault’s conception of subjectification, or *assujettissement*. In Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow’s *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Foucault writes an afterword in English, in which he notes: ‘I have sought to study [...] the way a human being turns him – or herself into a subject [...] it is not power, but the subject that is the general theme of my research’ (1984, p. 208). Foucault also writes in *Il faut défendre la société*: ‘Ne pas demander aux sujets comment, pourquoi, au nom de quel droit ils peuvent accepter de se laisser assujettir, mais montrer comment ce sont les relations d’assujettissement effectives qui fabriquent des sujets’ (1992, pp. 38-39). Similarly, for Preciado, the main focus of his project in *Testo Junkie* is the process of pharmacopornographic subjectification: he takes testosterone in order to understand how the pharmacological and pornographic regimes manufacture, and depend on manufacturing, subjects.

But in the afterword described above, Foucault also writes, in relation to his interest in the process of subjectification: ‘I have chosen the domain of sexuality – how men have learned to recognise themselves as subjects of “sexuality”’ (p. 208). In a recent talk, Preciado described *Testo Junkie* as an attempt to update *The History of Sexuality*, and wondered, ‘what would *The History of Sexuality* have been like if Foucault had taken gender seriously?’ (2018). Preciado added: ‘Foucault was not a feminist: this is a big issue for all of us, to work with a historian of sexuality, who’s not only not a feminist, but refused to engage with feminist discourses of his time’ (2018). Preciado’s work is in dialogue with Foucault, but, crucially, Preciado provides a gendered, feminist perspective of subjectification.

In order to provide this perspective, Preciado's work is inevitably influenced by Butler, and her gendered Foucauldian conception of subjectification, which elides subject and process: 'There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability' (1993, p. 9). Butler wonders, 'how might we think resistance within the terms of reiteration', which represents the landscape of Preciado's pharmacopornographic project: both 'hot, psychotropic punk capitalism', and trans-feminist resistance (1997, p. 12; 2013, p. 33). Preciado uses medically unregulated Testogel in a trans-feminist context, both consuming and resisting pharmacopornographic power. Preciado also writes of 'fictions': 'subject fictions' and 'biopolitical fictions' – here, he describes perpetual, mutable subjectification, following Butler: subjectification produces subject fictions, which are always being written and rewritten (pp. 367-371). Preciado's use of 'fiction' also implies the continuity between bio and prosthetic bodies, both equally fictitious and constructed through various processes of subjectification. Preciado describes drag king workshops in these iterative terms: becoming a drag king is a process that involves 'finding a way' between 'norm and improvisation, between repetition and invention' (p. 373).

But Preciado also writes of the necessity for the 'drag king virus' to be 'triggered in every participant', describing bodily imbibed performativity. Here, Preciado intensifies Butler's conceptions of performativity. Preciado finds Butler's work, gender studies and the performative turn to be foundational, but he proposes a more thorough materiality of gender. In a recent talk, he noted that gender studies has been 'pushing back the body, and the biological' (2018). He added that milligrams were 'biotheatrical', rather than performative – here describing his practice of 'biodrag' (2018). 'Biodrag' describes the practice of molecular performativity: Butler's elaboration of gender performativity is primarily concerned with gesture and discourse; Preciado extends this conception to describe subjectification through prostheses – 'living (molecular) mimicry' (191).

Preciado also implicitly engages with Butler's writing on vulnerability: Butler writes of the necessity of understanding and theorising vulnerability as 'exposure to power' not antithetical to resistance (2014). Through using Testogel, Preciado exposes himself to pharmacopornographic power, and uses his exposure, or vulnerability, as political resistance. But Preciado also, inevitably, theorises trans masculinity in relation to (and in opposition to) dominant hetero-macho conceptions of masculinity which eschew vulnerability. Preciado both embodies vulnerability, identifying as gender-queer or non-binary, and uses Testogel in order to experiment with feelings of invulnerability not

accessible to him as a woman: for example, he writes of taking Testogel and walking around ‘feeling in perfect harmony with the rhythm of the city’, feeling the ‘increased capacity of my muscles, my brain’ –descriptions perhaps contrasting with Butler’s incitement to embrace vulnerability (p. 153).

Here, Preciado’s use of Haraway is helpful: Preciado writes that liberation movements must ‘reclaim the right to participate in the *construction* of biopolitical fictions’ (p. 352). But Preciado adds that, ‘to echo Donna J. Haraway’, this construction must be a ‘positioned, responsible, corporal political practice, so that anyone wishing to be a political subject will begin by being the lab rat in her or his own laboratory’ (p. 353). Preciado explores bodily vulnerability or exposure, and invulnerability associated with Testogel, but his practice is always embodied and ‘positioned’ – Preciado’s use of ‘positioned’ references Haraway’s essay on ‘situated knowledges’ and the ‘privilege of partial perspective’ (1988). Haraway is omnipresent in *Testo Junkie*, providing Preciado with the structure of ‘feminist objectivity’ and making clear the necessity of prostheses (1988). Haraway’s cyborgs suffuse his texts, epitomising the possibility of the technologically enhanced body, and allowing Preciado to collapse distinctions between techno and bio bodies (*A Cyborg Manifesto*, 1984). Preciado’s work also exemplifies Haraway’s focus on what McKenzie Wark describes as the ‘forces of reproduction’, rather than production (2013). For Wark, Preciado’s Haraway influence ensures that we are ‘not always [...] relegating questions of gender and sex to some place outside of technical questions’ (2013).

Preciado’s emphasis on localised, body power perhaps also derives from Haraway: in her essay on situated knowledges, Haraway writes, ‘Feminists don’t need a doctrine of objectivity that promises transcendence [...] we also don’t want to theorise the world, much less act within it, in terms of Global Systems, but we do need an earth-wide network of connections, including the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different – and power-differentiated – communities’ (1988, p. 580). Preciado writes of the need to create ‘*global* counter hegemonic networks for reprogramming gender’ – but, crucially, he refers here to the proliferation of drag king workshops (p. 377). Preciado, following Haraway, acknowledges the need for ‘earth-wide’, but embodied, networks – networks which acknowledge a variety of power dynamics, languages, knowledges and bodies.

Preciado’s focus on shared, embodied networks also derives from Silvia Federici’s work – specifically *Caliban and the Witch* (1998). *Caliban and the Witch*, and its exploration of women’s work and women’s bodies, and historical attempts to curtail both, suffuse *Testo Junkie*. Federici examines common land, witches, amateurism and the professionalisation

of knowledge, all thematically central to Preciado's theory and praxis. Federici also makes clear the entwinement of the rise of capitalism with a new patriarchal order and the oppression of women. Federici writes of the significance that 'the witch hunt occurred simultaneously with the colonisation and extermination of the populations of the New World, the English enclosures, the beginning of the slave trade [...] it climaxed in that interregnum between the end of feudalism and the capitalist "take off" (2004, p. 164-165). Here, Federici emphasises the significance of subjectification: the figure of the witch, and the control of this image and her body, was crucial to new emergent capitalism. Equally, Preciado's experimentation with Testogel emphasises pharmacopornographic processes of subjectification, body-control and bodily self-control.

In *Caliban and the Witch*, Federici also weaves macro analysis of the development of capitalism with micro, local analysis of women's bodies – often specifically in connection with witch hunts, symbolic of a new capitalist patriarchy. In his exploration of pharmacopornography in *Testo Junkie* and *Pornotopia*, Preciado similarly moves between macro and micro analysis – for example, writing 'to gain access to the question of the *pharmakon*, we have to go the way of witches' (p. 145). Derrida's understanding of the *pharmakon* frames Preciado's theorisation of the 'pharmaco' in pharmacopornography, which provides the basis for his testo-project ('La Pharmacie de Platon', *La Dissémination* (1972)). The *pharmakon*'s status as simultaneously curative and poisonous allows for Preciado's analysis of inventive resistance embedded in pharmacopornography – through Testogel. The Derridean configuration of the *pharmakon* as poison and cure is developed in the course of a reading of Plato's use of the term *pharmakon*, and his description of writing as a *pharmakon*. But witches' bodies and histories, following Federici, are equally central to Preciado's theorisation of Testogel as a *pharmakon* – perhaps inspired by Derrida's work on Plato's examination of the *pharmakeus* (sorcerer/pharmacist) in relation to the *pharmakon*. Derrida noted Plato's lack of discussion of the *pharmakos* – human sacrifices or scapegoats – akin to the witch, in some ways (1972, p. 25).

Preciado's work is also embedded in the recent, embodied tradition of porn studies – his writing is galvanised by porn scholars, activists and artists, including Linda Williams and Annie Sprinkle. Sexual pleasure, pornographic rhythms and pornographic cycles are central to his development of pharmacopornography, and his sexual narratives. Preciado might describe his own work as 'post-porn', which he believes to be the 'exercise of re-appropriating the technology of the production of sexuality' (2015). For Preciado, 'postporno' is 'not an aesthetic' but an 'assemblage of experimental productions' –

including his testo-project (2015). But Preciado's writing, as a later chapter explores, is also, arguably, pornographic – particularly in its descriptions of his sex life with his partner, Virginie Despentes. In the field of porn studies, Preciado references Linda Williams, and is, perhaps, influenced by her 1999 introduction to a later edition of *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure and the "Frenzy of the Visible"*, originally published in 1989. Williams describes writing on pornography: she 'increasingly suspects that indifference is fruitless', 'I thus hereby admit, retrospectively [...] a genuinely prurient interest in the genre' that is 'not quite owned up to' in the first edition of *Hard Core* (1999, p. 57). Equally, Preciado makes clear, through the sexual narratives of *Testo Junkie*, the reader's engagement with the text, and our shared prurience. *Testo Junkie* is, simultaneously, a pornographic text, a masturbatory prosthesis, a 'gender bioterrorism' manual and an analysis of histories of sexuality and gender (p. 384). Ultimately, Haraway, Butler, Federici and Williams provide Preciado with a performative, embodied, situated, prurient framework.

This thesis primarily examines *Pornotopia* and *Testo Junkie*, on the basis that these texts develop a theory of pharmacopornography: the term 'pharmacopornography' also first appears in *Pornotopia*. This project specifically analyses the collaboration between 'pharmaco' and 'porno' in order to explore pharmacopornographic subjectivity. I briefly analyse and refer to Preciado's first short book, *Manifiesto contrasexual*, when relevant or helpful, although its theses are less central to this specific research on pharmacopornography. *Manifiesto contrasexual* is specifically concerned with sexuality, through an examination of sadomasochism, anuses and dildos; its crucial theoretical contribution is the assertion that sexuality is prosthetic – a theme developed further in *Testo Junkie*, specifically in chapters on sex work. Preciado's writing on sexuality and pornography in *Testo Junkie* represents a stronger, more theoretically nuanced and developed version of *Manifiesto contrasexual*.

I analyse *Pornotopia* in English, because the text is based on, and is almost identical to, Preciado's English PhD thesis for Princeton's architecture department. I analyse *Testo Junkie* in English, because Bruce Benderson's translation, produced in collaboration with Preciado, is the most recent version of the text, and includes extra material written by Preciado not available in the French translation or the original Spanish text. Benderson writes that a chapter on 'pharmacopower', for example, which is central to my understanding of pharmacopornography, has been 'modified and developed for this English-language edition by the author' (2013). Noting other revisions, I concluded that between 2008 and 2013, Preciado revised *Testo Junkie* significantly enough, and included enough extra

material, to warrant using the English edition in this thesis – although reading the French and Spanish editions has, of course, been helpful. Preciado, fluent in English, Spanish and French, also emphasised the collaborative nature of his translations in a recent conversation (2018).

### **Structure of the thesis**

This research analyses how pharmacological and pornographic industries affect the design and production of genders and subjectivities. The thesis further refines Preciado's assertion that contemporary, 'pharmacopornographic' regimes of power produce subjects rather than objects, or people rather than things. Ultimately, this research is concerned with understanding the production of pharmacologically-determined subjectivity. This thesis articulates various subject positions, as a means of theorising pharmacopornographic subjectivity: 'The Voyeur', 'The Sex Worker', 'The Biodrag King' and 'The Junkie'. These subject-position chapters are prefaced with a chapter exploring theoretical frameworks I use to analyse Preciado's work, and the thesis concludes with a chapter on accelerationism and the microprosthetic scale of *Testo Junkie*.

'Micropolitics' describes the theoretical landscape of *Testo Junkie*: Preciado aligns his testo-project with theories of plasticity, addiction, repetition, vulnerability and complicity. Catherine Malabou has written that neuroplasticity can be defined as a tension between constancy and creation (2008, p. 71). In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado uses contraception to describe this tension between bodily regulation and invention. The regulatory effects of hormones are firmly established, but Preciado explores how hormones are capable of inventing and constructing new subjectivities – specifically Testogel. Malabou's theory is based on neuroplasticity, but through Preciado's work, this chapter elaborates a new understanding of body plasticity. Body plasticity is founded on habit and repetition, and this chapter examines how habits exemplify both the fixity and creativity ingrained in constancy and creation. This chapter also explores how the iterative process of habit formation is always vulnerable to addiction. This first chapter analyses how Preciado accesses agency through micropolitics. In 'Micropolitics', I explore the following theories: 'awkward politics', which describes the close, and possibly complicit, nature of contemporary protest, following Carrie Smith-Prei and Maria Stehle, and vulnerability, explored through Butler's analyses of its intersections with agency. In opposition to vulnerability, I theorise 'permeability' in Preciado's work, based on a process of perpetual exchange – of drugs,

philosophies and bodies. Addiction is explored through theories of habit, and in relation to Natasha Dow Schüll's *Addiction by Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas* (2012). Crucially, 'Micropolitics' examines how our bodies interact with body-technologies: often awkwardly and addictively, and how micro-prosthetics are capable of constructing subjectivities and bodies.

'The Voyeur' analyses the pervasive nature of voyeurism in Preciado's first book, *Pornotopia*, and describes how voyeurism becomes a defining characteristic of pharmacopornographic subjectivity. *Pornotopia* represents Preciado's first sustained development of 'pharmacopornography': the text explores how architecture is capable of constructing bodies, subjects and fictions of gender and sexuality. For Preciado, architectonic embodiment and pharmacopornographic capitalism reinforce each other, and architecture produces pharmacopornographic subjectivity. This chapter examines how voyeurism structures this relationship, as I explore the house-as-observatory during the Cold War, and the voyeur as a composite actor/spectator. *Playboy* is the focus of *Pornotopia*, and *Playboy*'s eroticisation of domestic interiors, which contributes to the development of pharmacopornographic subjectivity. 'The Voyeur' also examines *Playboy*'s development of a new form of modern masculinity and masculine subjectification through voyeurism – in the tradition of Laura Mulvey's 'male gaze' (1975). This chapter explores the construction of spaces through prostheses, describing the contribution of the micro-prosthetic to pharmacopornographic power. 'The Voyeur' also analyses Rem Koolhaas's 'Junkspace' as a transitional space, between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power. Preciado's conception of voyeurism is defined through what he describes as a 'play' between binaries: dressed/undressed, inside/outside; this chapter explores this 'play' in relation to transgression and awkwardness (2014, p. 48).

'The Sex Worker' explores depictions of pornography in *Pornotopia* and *Testo Junkie*, in relation to theories of vulnerability and multiplicity. In *Caliban and the Witch*, Silvia Federici writes that the body is the locus of exploitation and alienation and writes of the need to end the 'work-discipline that defines it' (p. 18). In comparison, in *Pornotopia* and *Testo Junkie*, Preciado explores the pleasure-discipline that galvanises pharmacopornographic economies. This chapter analyses contemporary forms of pornography and contraception in order to determine the function of sex work in pharmacopornography, and the sex worker's contribution to our understanding of pharmacopornographic subjectivity. 'The Sex Worker' examines Preciado's conception of 'pornpower' and his depictions of women in relation to disciplinary and

pharmacopornographic power regimes. This chapter explores women's agency, or lack of agency, and the framing of women through holes and spaces in Preciado's writing. 'The Sex Worker' also explores the centrality of dildos in *Testo Junkie* and *The Contrasexual Manifesto*, the significance of pornographic prostheses to Preciado's testo-project, and their production of pharmacopornographic subjectivities. Here, I also analyse Foucault's conception of the *entrepreneur du soi*, Deleuze's *dividuel*, and theories of subjectification. Ultimately, this chapter examines pornography and the pill through Preciado's 'pornographic imperative': 'fuck you yourself', expressing sex work in terms of self-discipline and self-regulation.

'The Biodrag King' examines Preciado's practice of biodrag, which blends Butler's work on performativity with Haraway's work on the body in order to 'push the performative hypothesis further into the body, as far as its organs and fluids; drawing it into the cells, chromosomes, and genes' (p. 110). Here, Preciado illustrates the potential permeability of Butler's theory of performativity, describing its metaphorical synthesis with the body. 'The Biodrag King' chapter examines this permeability, and the practice of biodrag, and how, in *Testo Junkie*, queer rhetoric and queer politics can be absorbed through the skin like testosterone. Antonin Artaud's *Théâtre de la Cruauté* (1938) is Preciado's hypotext: Artaud wrote that the physicality of theatre was capable of sensitising audiences and penetrating through their skin. In order to theorise and analyse biodrag, this chapter explores drag as a process of mourning, drag in relation to the structure of a virus, and drag and masculinity. This chapter makes clear the relationship between Preciado's biodrag and his friend, Dustan's death. Preciado describes biodrag as the 'technical imitation of the very materiality of the living being, the pharmacopornographic production of somatic fictions of masculinity and femininity' (p. 191). 'The Biodrag King' examines the production of 'somatic fictions' in *Testo Junkie* and their proliferation in pharmacopornography.

'The Junkie' analyses how *Testo Junkie*'s format, wildly weaving narrative and theory, mirrors the structure of addiction. Preciado writes that a pharmacopornographic society functions on an excitation-frustration-excitation model, which produces perpetual dissatisfaction in order to produce more excitation. This chapter explores how Preciado describes the 'ritual' of this rhythm, but, more significantly, how he embeds it in the text of *Testo Junkie* (p. 307). 'The Junkie' examines how performativity suffuses Preciado's body and writing. 'The Junkie' analyses Preciado's addiction to his former partner, Despentés and testosterone and theorises addiction as a pharmacopornographic disposition. This chapter also explores addiction and pornography in *Testo Junkie*, and makes clear the reader's

subjection to the rhythm of excitation-frustration-excitation, and our complicity with pharmacopornographic subjectification. ‘The Junkie’ examines Preciado’s elision of addiction with risk, and the resultant implication for his theoretical and practical construction of masculinity. This chapter also analyses addiction-as-architecture, of both pharmacopornography and resistance, and, simultaneously, addiction as a sticky, viscous brake. This chapter analyses pharmacopornographic subjectivity through the frame of Preciado’s exhilarating, sticky, uncomfortable addictions.

My last chapter, ‘Accelerationism and Xenofeminism’ examines Preciado’s writing in relation to accelerationist and xenofeminist theories. This chapter is in dialogue with Benjamin Noys’ analysis of Preciado’s work, and his texts: *The Persistence of the Negative: A Critique of Contemporary Continental Theory* (2010), and *Malign Velocities: Accelerationism and Capitalism* (2014). This chapter specifically engages with ‘The Accelerate Manifesto’, ‘The Xenofeminist Manifesto’ and Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams’ *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* (2015). ‘Accelerationism and Xenofeminism’ examines Preciado’s affinities with accelerationist theory through his immersion in ‘hot psychotropic punk capitalism’, his appropriation of bio-technologies, and his writing on *jouissance* (p. 33). But, equally, this chapter explores Preciado’s micro-work, in comparison with accelerationist ‘scaling up’. Here, I also examine Preciado’s commitment to women’s histories and practices and gender politics, in contrast with accelerationism’s flattening of difference. This chapter analyses Preciado and accelerationism in relation to: speed, scale, reproduction, autogenesis, sex machines, the integration of men and machines, labour, misery and mourning. Examining Preciado’s work and accelerationist theories elucidates both accelerationist politics and contemporary gender politics.

Ultimately, this thesis tests Preciado’s texts against contemporary feminist, queer and accelerationist theories, in order to determine their efficacy and potential, concurrently mapping the trans-queer-feminist landscape. Through defining pharmacopornographic subjectivity, this research intends to contribute to contemporary cultural theory relating to pornography, pharmacology, performativity, vulnerability, addiction and transgender politics. Preciado describes his own work as the ‘lucid and intentional practice of autodecapitation’: ‘At the beginning of this book, I took testosterone [...] I wanted to decapitate myself [...] dissect [...] This book is the trace left by that cut’ (p. 425). Preciado’s writing enriches gender studies and feminist theories of science with his embodied

exploration of taking hormones and theorising his own body: he designates his body an object of study, slathers it with Testogel, gender theory and lubricant, and cuts it open.

## Micropolitics

‘Fuck me’ (Preciado 2013, p. 208).

### Rats

‘What’s my problem? First of all, I’m a rat. Which means, life is hard.’ *Ratatouille* (2007).

Preciado writes that ‘fuck me’ epitomises the relationship between bodies and power: ‘Fuck me [...] says the body, all the while seeking forms of autocontrol and autoextermination’ (p. 208). ‘Fuck me’ expresses agency, relationality, complicity and frustration. The phrase represents a desire for power, and a willingness to participate in subjugation to power – here, power is imbibed, rather than imposed. Preciado clarifies our body’s stake in contemporary capitalism, and reminds us that biopower operates from the inside, rather than the outside. This chapter will examine plasticity and flexibility, habit and addiction, and vulnerability and complicity, motifs which characterise Preciado’s pharmacopornographic practice and recur later in the thesis. The following chapters are framed through close textual analysis of *Testo Junkie* and *Pornotopia*, but here, I specifically explore theories central to pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

*Testo Junkie*’s symbol of the internalised power described above is the rat. In 2013, Preciado wrote an article about the sport ‘jeu de paume’ for the Parisian gallery of the same name. ‘Jeu de paume’, an early form of tennis without rackets, was supposedly played using a ball made from rat’s skin. Preciado recalls another ‘jeu de paume’ hall in Versailles that hosted the French National Assembly on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June in 1789, when they declared themselves in opposition to the King, galvanising the social unrest that developed into the French Revolution. Preciado writes: ‘Comme le tiers état s’est élevé un jour contre le pouvoir souverain de l’Ancien Régime, partout se lèvent aujourd’hui les rats sans peau du capitalisme cognitif qui appellent à une révolution somato-politique et sexo-sémiotique: pédés, gouines, féministes, junkies, migrants, sans papiers, travailleurs sexuels, handis, séropositifs, transsexuelles et transgenres... le jeu des rats est ouvert. Dans la ratière digitale du Jeu de Paume, la révolte peut commencer’ (2013). Preciado’s rats of cognitive capitalism are ludically skinless; their skin stripped for sport, his rats are vulnerable and angry, rising up in a somato-political revolution.

Rats are symbolically significant for Preciado, and in the context of body plasticity addiction, and complicity. Firstly, rats are associated with experiments and laboratories. Preciado describes his self-experimentation with testosterone in terms of ‘lab rats’: ‘I’m the laboratory rat and the scientific subject that conducts the research’ (p. 140), ‘The lab rat is becoming human. The human being is becoming a rodent’ (p. 140), ‘I’m simultaneously the scientist and the rat he’s ripping open to study’ (p. 55), ‘anyone wishing to be a political subject will begin by being the lab rat in her or his own laboratory’ (p. 353). Animals and humans appear continuous: ‘The lab rat is becoming human. The human being is becoming rodent’ (p. 140). The lab rat and the scientist are indistinguishable: ‘I’m the laboratory rat and the scientific subject that conducts the research’ (p. 140). Here, rats represent the contemporary fluidity of power, and the dissolution of visible, distinct positions of power in contrast to positions of subjection.

The rat was also the first cyborg: Preciado notes that Manfred Clynes and Nathan S. Kline coined the term ‘cyborg’ to describe a technologically supplemented organism, and operated on a laboratory rat, giving it a ‘cyber tail’ (p. 31). Rats are associated with technological advancement, the utilisation of prostheses and the continuity of bio-bodies and techno-bodies. The rat also symbolises the potential of technology adoption, in comparison with animal adaptation – a distinction examined below, through Bernard Stiegler. The rat is a symbol of intervention and enhancement, and the naturalisation of body-technologies. The technologically-supplemented rat also claims a new identity: the cyborg. Following Haraway, the cyborg is a posthumanist invention – the cyborg rat rejects rigid boundaries, problematic dualisms and essentialist, gendered conceptions of bodies. In ‘A Cyborg Manifesto’, Haraway writes that a cyborg politics struggles against ‘the central dogma of phallogocentrism’ (p. 218).

But, equally, rats represent the pharmaceutical reinforcement of gender binaries and phallogocentrism. In 2014, the US National Institutes of Health was forced to demand that laboratories test on both male and female animals: labs had often tested solely on male rats because menstruation was considered an unnecessary variable. Subsequently, it was discovered that statins and sleep medications, among other medications, had unknown effects on women’s health, and the dosage on a number of medications was adjusted. Comedian Stephen Colbert noted that pharmaceutical companies reinforced the presumption that ‘male is default human’ (2014). Thus, rats are both futuristic, genderless cyborgs and tools of pharmaceutical phallogocentrism.

Crucially, rats were the subject of B. F. Skinner's experiments, which examined operant and classical conditioning. Skinner designed a box with levers and treats, the rat was placed in the box and used to study conditioning through reward and punishment mechanisms. A book on gambling, *Addiction by Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas* describes the similarities between gamblers and Skinner's rats. In an online forum, a woman named Darlene pleaded for a psychological justification for her gambling addiction (2012, p. 104). One response described Skinner's theory of 'intermittent reinforcement': Skinner realised that if the rats always received a treat, they would only press the lever when they were hungry (p. 104). But if the treats were randomly dispensed, the rat would continuously press the lever, 'over and over, and over, and over. The rat becomes obsessed, addicted if you will. This, then, is the psychological principle that slot machines operate on, and how it operates on you' (p. 104). Darlene responded with a call to arms, similar to Preciado's, above: 'perhaps we should form a splinter group, calling ourselves 'The Rat People', since we all know that when the pellets drop, they could just as well be cyanide as chocolate' (p. 105). Other members of the forum on gambling addiction ran with the rat trope: 'when I gamble, I feel like a rat in a trap', 'I feel like a Rat Person' (p. 105). Here, the Rat People express their addiction to pleasure, or motivation by perceived pleasure: the perpetual self-production and consumption of pleasure is primary.

Lab rats, cyborg-rats and Rat People appear, initially, to be subjects without agency: skinless, prodded and addicted to pleasure. But rats also demonstrate and symbolise habit, improvisation, addiction, vulnerability and invention – for example, of new drugs. Preciado's article for the *Jeu de Paume* was entitled 'Peau de Rat', which recalls an ingredient in a potion: 'eye of newt, and toe of frog, wool of bat, and tongue of dog', as *Macbeth*'s witches incanted (Shakespeare, 1606). Perhaps this connotation was intentional: Preciado's chapter on 'Pharmacopower' in *Testo Junkie* opens with a discussion of witches, alchemists and midwives (p. 144). Preciado cites Federici, who writes that the witch hunt involved both claiming women's bodies as reproductive forces, and ending the use of natural resources through the restricted access to, and parcelling up of, common land like lakes, forests, rivers and meadows. Shared (mostly female) knowledge of bodies, plants and how they worked was quickly extinguished. Preciado's 'peau de rat' and his rallying cry: 'le jeu des rats est ouvert' represent an attempt to reclaim resources, land, agency and knowledge, or access to shared knowledge.

Butler has written that 'laying claim' to an identity is characteristic of performativity (2016). The 'lab rat' has become a claimed and performed identity for Preciado, and for a

group of online gamblers: the hybrid ‘Rat People’. Rats are adaptable subjects of transformation, deformation and enhancement. Not coincidentally, rats are also typically depicted as monstrous: adaptable and adapted bodies are often the subject of fear, suspicion or ridicule – from Frankenstein, to disabled people, to trans men with prosthetic penises. The rats described above have been cyborgs, potion ingredients, and objects of scientific study.

But rats in Deleuze and Guattari are depicted in swarms: ‘le pullulement des rats, la meute’; they write: ‘dans un devenir-animal, on a toujours affaire à une meute, à une bande’ (1980, pp. 285-292). They write of the process of ‘devenir-animal’, which symbolises the continuity between humans and animals (p. 145). Preciado’s rats and ‘Rat People’ affirm this continuity, but they also arrest it, discovering a form of resistant agency in the space between becoming-rat and the swarm (285, p. 145). In their analysis of the film *Willard*, Deleuze and Guattari describe how the eponymous protagonist must choose between joining the rat-pack and returning to his work and family. Brent Adkins writes that the authors illustrate ‘two tendencies for any assemblage towards stasis and change’, noting that their text explores ‘the way in which the tendency towards change passes through ‘becoming-animal’ (2015, p. 142). In *Plateaus*, ‘devenir-animal’ and its affinity with change are inevitable, but the ‘Rat People’ reject this perceived inevitability and embrace a status between stasis and change. Half rat, half person, they symbolise the potential fixity and possibility inherent in uncertain spaces (p. 145). The Rat Person embraces a liminal status, tantalising the eventual transformation into rat or person, perhaps discovering a form of agency within the confines of this liminal space.

Through claiming a lab rat, cyborg, Rat-Person identity, Preciado advocates self-experimentation and the experience of being ‘both the scientist and the rat he’s ripping open to study’, citing Hervé Guibert (p. 55). Preciado believes in the possibility of designing his own laboratory environment and tailoring his own dosage. But through describing his relationship with Testogel through addiction, Preciado also implies relinquished agency. In *Addiction by Design*, Dow Schüll writes that companies in charge of gambling machines have noticed that gamblers have become accustomed to more complex types of games, through addictive and adaptive mechanisms. Correspondingly, games like video poker have introduced an increased element of perceived ‘choice’ that ‘gives the ‘Rat People’ a hand in the design of their own Skinner box’ (2012, p. 123). Later in the book, the author writes: ‘instead of risking that the Rat People become aware of the box, let the rats design their own Skinner boxes’ (p. 159). Dow Schüll describes an addicted gambler who begins working

with gambling machines, with the belief that understanding their mechanisms will cure his addiction. But, at the centre of each machine is a small black box that determines the outcome of each game. Despite dismantling machines daily, the gambler's addiction persists, because the machine is ultimately ineffable.

Thus, the possibilities inherent in adoption, adaptation and addiction are often accounted for and limited: de-territorialisation becomes re-territorialisation, following Deleuze and Guattari. The rats described above prompt a number of problems: interacting with environments with an acknowledgement of architecturally programmed deviation, successfully incorporating prosthetics into bio-bodies, changing our relationship with the structure of reward-and-punishment, or pleasure, and directing the *pharmakon* from cyanide to chocolate. The Rat Person also demonstrates the potential of liminal identities and spaces, which the discussion of plasticity below will explore. The Rat Person makes visible the limitations and potential associated with addicted bodies, and the slippage between agency and subjection – analysed below in the context of flexibility and complicity.

### **Plasticity, Flexibility and Habit**

Firstly, Preciado's testo-project is embedded in the culture that he intends to disrupt: the pharmaceutical industry produces the testosterone gel applied by Preciado – if for the treatment of low testosterone in men. Preciado obtains the gel without a prescription from a dealer in transgender hormones and refuses to adhere to medical guidelines regulating its application. But although Preciado's experiment could be interpreted as the evasion of pharmaceutical and capitalist regulation, the contemporary theoretical consensus contends that there is no 'outside' to power (Foucault 1990, p. 95; Hardt and Negri 2000, p. 45; Boltanski and Chiapello 2005, p. 512; Butler 2006, p. 93). As Hardt and Negri write: 'We should be done once and for all with the search for an outside, a standpoint that imagines a purity for our politics' (2000, p. 45). In a pharmacopornographic society, flows of capital, hormones and fluids are the means of both capitalist control and transgression (for Preciado, Testogel is this dual substance), and identifying political disruption is difficult. Preciado's body project both maps neatly onto capitalism's contours and appears creatively resistant to pharmacopornographic control. Malabou's conceptions of neuronal plasticity and flexibility provide constructive terms for analysis.

In *Que faire de notre cerveau?*, Malabou writes of a contemporary predilection for conflating plasticity and flexibility in neuroscientific discourse. Plasticity is defined as the

capacity to both take form (clay) and give form (plastic surgery) and flexibility as the property of a material that can only passively receive form (2004, p. 11). The etymology of ‘plasticity’, deriving from the Greek word ‘plassein’, to mould, indicates its creative potential. But, according to Malabou, the conflation of neuronal plasticity with the more placid flexibility underlines a scientific reinforcement of capitalism: the term ‘flexibility’ has an affinity with contemporary exhortations to mobility, fluidity of capital and adaptability (p. 31). Malabou notes that the discovery and increased study of brain plasticity is juxtaposed with the development of management culture and worker-flexibility. In Malabou’s writing, corporate discourse has misappropriated scientific discovery (p. 12). But distinguishing between plasticity and flexibility is crucial in terms of identifying creative resistance: Malabou writes that our central project is ‘refuser d’être les individus flexibles qui conjuguent contrôle de soi permanent et capacité de se modifier au gré des flux, des transferts, des échanges par peur de l’explosion’ (p. 78). Malabou advocates replacing perpetual self-control with an acceptance of the ‘peur de l’explosion’ (p. 78).

Malabou’s conceptions of plasticity and flexibility apply to the brain and, more broadly, to the body and identity. Malabou writes that the creativity inherent in plasticity is not solely the preserve of the brain, but animates the whole nervous system (p. 43). This body plasticity is the landscape of *Testo Junkie*: as Preciado writes in *Manifiesto contrasexual*, the pharmaceutical industry works on the presupposition that the body is ‘an open and plastic landscape’ (‘la medicina contemporánea trabaja el cuerpo como un paisaje abierto [...] esta plasticidad somática’, 2016, p. 50).<sup>1</sup> Body plasticity (‘plasticidad somática’) indicates the potential for radical resistance, but only if we can distinguish between plasticity and flexibility, which, as Malabou indicates, have become indistinguishable. But we might phrase this distinction in the following terms: flexible bodies map onto capitalist mechanisms of control; plastic bodies are capable of creativity. For example, in the context of *Testo Junkie*, flexibility refers to applying Testogel in accordance with medical protocols and in co-operation with your doctor. In comparison, plasticity represents taking Testogel like an illegal drug, creatively and without concern for its regulation. Body plasticity means to view the body, as Malabou views the brain: as ‘un facteur de désobéissance à toute forme constituée’ (p. 6). In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado experiments with testosterone, improvising his identity and demonstrating the potential of

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Spanish rather than French because this phrasing only appears in the Spanish edition – Preciado revised the text for the French edition.

body plasticity: he refuses to submit to pharmacopornographic models and narratives of gender and sexuality.

However, it becomes necessary to further define body plasticity, in order to distinguish it from flexibility, and to determine the hinge, or space, between them – which may be more easily discernible than the separate states. When Malabou writes that neuroplasticity is ‘un facteur de désobéissance à toute forme constituée’, she risks romanticising plasticity, through anthropomorphising it as a Robin Hood character – a noble fugitive, and corrective to the system (p. 6). Preciado’s theory and practice are capable of bridging the established binaries in Malabou’s primary philosophical conceptions and identifying an uncertain, complicit space between plasticity and flexibility where agency is expressed. His interpretation of agency as necessarily complicit is perhaps more nuanced than Malabou’s conception of plasticity. Malabou writes that our brains are ‘confondus’ by the normative reproductive logic of flexibility, and her book exalts plasticity (p. 72). In comparison, Preciado urges that we avoid representing bodies and the ‘dominant manifestations of the pharmacopornographic era’ in terms of domination and oppression: ‘a movement in which miniaturized, liquid power from the outside infiltrates the obedient body of individuals.’ (pp. 207-208). Preciado writes: ‘it is not power infiltrating from the outside, it is the body desiring power, seeking to swallow it, eat it, administer it, wolf it down, more, always more, through every hole, by every possible route of application. Turning oneself into power.’ Or, more succinctly: “‘fuck me”, says the body’ (p. 208). Crucially, the body ‘desires’ power, and is complicit in its infiltration, which Malabou’s writing denies – through her exhortation to eschew flexibility’s moulding in favour of controlling our own brain and bodies.

Reciprocally, however, Malabou’s conceptualisation of experience in relation to plasticity and flexibility clarifies Preciado’s writing on agency and habits. In *Que faire de notre cerveau?*, Malabou writes that neuronal synapses can be strengthened or weakened according to experience: habits play an important role in body plasticity and flexibility. Addiction is similarly habitual: Dow Schüll writes that ‘objects matter as much as subjects’, adding that, ‘addiction is not the property of a subject, rather it represents a relationship of habitual interaction between a subject and an object’ (2012, p. 17). Habits appear to enable both addiction and creative plasticity. Malabou writes in *Plasticity and Pathology* that ‘a critical approach to subjectivity reveals the priority of fashioning over being’ (2015, p. 28); habits individualise and particularise the body and express regular interactions with objects and people. From Aristotle to Merleau-Ponty, identity is maintained through habit repetition,

rather than emerging from an underlying, unchanging self.<sup>2</sup> Malabou also writes, developing Foucault's concepts of self-fashioning, that 'subjectivity never precedes its own invention' (2015, p. 30). This process of invention occurs through bodily habituation: habits enable the body to exist comfortably in, and comprehend, its environments. According to Malabou, plasticity is 'un régime d'auto organisation systématique qui repose sur la capacité qu'a un organisme à intégrer les modifications qu'il subit et à les modifier en retour' (2008, p. 111). Habits enable bodily self-organisation and are capable of integrating modifications and implementing new changes. Here, habit appears to be the natural ally of plasticity.

But Tom Sparrow warns that plasticity has a 'tendency toward fixity': 'the power of plasticity faces the constant threat of fixity, homeostasis, sedimentation, conservatism' (2015, p. 229). The bodily stability and plasticity enabled by habits can become fixed and unproductive, and, in fact, arrest plasticity. Sparrow writes that 'exposure' and 'experimentation' ensure our plasticity is 'supple'; we must be perpetually exposed to the possibility of 'deformation' and 'reconfiguration' in various forms – even if we are equally exposed to trauma as ecstasy (p. 232). And ordinary and everyday experiences are more important than 'experiences of high art' or excitement, in identity formation (p. 295). Thus, habits act paradoxically on the body: they enable us to work effectively, but they also trap us in repetitive behavioural patterns, yet they free our bodies to 'explore new modes of action' (p. 197). Here, habits map onto the uncertain space between plasticity and flexibility, and are capable of acting as a hinge, or revolving door, between the two states. In summary, perhaps Preciado articulates an agentic space between plasticity and flexibility, which can be produced and particularised through habits: we can now explore how this space operates.

Preciado writes in *Testo Junkie*, underlining the importance of habit in the formation of both addiction and plasticity: 'everything is a matter of doses, of melting and crystallisation points [...] of regularity of milligrams, of form and mode of administration, of habit, of praxis' (p. 142).<sup>3</sup> He also writes of the initial rush of testosterone mixing with his blood: the movement inside 'calms', but 'the feeling of strength, like a pyramid revealed by a sandstorm, remains' (p. 21). Preciado's first application of testosterone implies both

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, 4; Book I, 7: 'these virtues are formed in man by his doing the actions'; Merleau-Ponty: 'l'habitude est dans le corps comme médiateur du monde' (1945, p. 167).

<sup>3</sup> From Paracelsus, 'Alle Dinge sind Gift, und nichts ist ohne Gift, allein die Dosis macht dass ein Ding kein Gift ist'; ('All things are poison, and nothing is without poison, the dosage alone makes it so a thing is not a poison'), 'Die dritte Defension wegen des Schreibens der neuen Recepte' *Septem Defensione*. 1965, p. 510). Via Deleuze and Guattari: 'l'art des doses' (the art of dosages'), *Mille plateaux* (1988, p. 160).

self-preservation and self-production: a fusion of the ‘natural’ and the epitome of construction. Preciado’s description of the exchange of melting and crystallisation, and his description of the formation of the pyramid in a sandstorm recall Sparrow’s summation of plasticity: ‘The dialectic of formation and explosion is meant, it seems to me, to salvage a conception of agency that respects the gap existing between the homeostatic impulse (self-preservation) and the creative impulse (self-production)’ (p. 227). Thus, *habit* maintains the gap between melting and crystallizing, between self-preservation and creation or destruction. Accordingly, habits are equally responsible for maintaining the prospect of plastic agency and addiction.

Sparrow specifically conceptualises plasticity through this dialectic, but ‘formation and explosion’ can also be interpreted as both flexibility and plasticity. ‘Formation’ is representative of flexibility’s moulded nature, and plasticity, in Malabou’s writing, is often characterized by explosiveness present in every form: ‘l’anéantissement de toute forme (l’explosif)’ (2005, p. 21). Sparrow’s description identifies the ‘gap’ between the dialectic of plasticity and flexibility. Sparrow writes that agency ‘respects’ this gap, but agency may be formed here: between homeostasis and self-production, through repetitive patterns of behaviour (habits and addiction) that map onto its shifting contours. In a footnote, Sparrow adds that his conception of the gap is ‘embodied in the distance that exists between neurons and is emblematic of the aleatory aspect of self-creation’ (p. 227). This distance or gap is a synapse, and, as Malabou titles a chapter in *Que faire de notre cerveau*: ‘vous êtes vos synapses’ (p. 55). Malabou cites Joseph LeDoux on ‘self’ and identity: ‘Mon idée de la personnalité est toute simple: c’est que notre ‘soi’, l’essence de ce que nous sommes, est le reflet des configurations d’interconnectivité entre les neurones de notre cerveau (p. 58).’ For Malabou and LeDoux, selfhood is synaptic (p. 58). Setting aside conceptions of a ‘self’, ‘essence’ or identity emerging from the interconnectivity of neurons, perhaps *agency* is formed in the (metaphoric) synapse – in the distance or gap between self-production and self-preservation. Preciado describes this desire for agency: ‘“fuck me”, says the body, all the while seeking forms of autocontrol and autoextermination’ (p. 208). Preciado’s ‘fuck me’ is agentic and stakes out a space between autocontrol (flexibility) and autoextermination (destructive, explosive plasticity) (p. 208).

Preciado’s ‘fuck me’ articulation of space, space that resembles a revolving door between states, is also an expression of tension and frustration. ‘Fuck me’ is an assertion of sexual desire, or an exhalation of frustration, but it conveys tension in either case. Malabou notes a helpful distinction between plasticity and flexibility: she contends that, in

comparison with plasticity characterised by resistance, flexibility fails to display tension and operates through a normative reproductive logic: ‘La flexibilité, qui ne donne à éprouver aucune tension véritable entre maintien et évolution mais les confound au sein d’une pure et simple logique d’imitation et de performance, n’est pas créatrice. Elle est reproductrice et normative’ (p. 72).

Preciado’s ritual and habitual experiments with testosterone also exemplify the necessity of ‘exposure’ to plasticity. Preciado exposes his oestrogen-permeated body to testosterone, producing a tension between constancy and creation, or ‘maintenance and evolution’, and learning how his body is exposed to power and possible agency (p. 72). Gender is also stripped bare in *Testo Junkie*: ‘gender must be torn from the macrodiscourse and diluted with a good dose of micropolitical hedonist psychedelics’ (p. 397). As Sparrow noted above, ‘exposure’ and ‘experimentation’ keep our plasticity ‘supple’, and oil the hinge between plasticity and flexibility to allow for ‘deformation’ and ‘reconfiguration’ (p. 203). Without exposure and experimentation, our body’s habits become mechanised, incomprehensible, or even invisible: we get ‘locked into circuits of behaviour’ and ‘our plasticity is paralysed’ (Sparrow 2015, p. 203). This decrease in plasticity, combined with a lack of power to think or act, means we (paradoxically) increasingly rely on habits and automatisations, or as Sparrow writes, citing William James: ‘the exigency of adaptation and habituation – “the effortless custody of automatism” – increases’ (p. 203). Accordingly, Slavoj Žižek, in a reading of Hegel, has described the habit as a *pharmakon* – simultaneously poison and cure (2012, p. 342). Habits are capable of masking patterns of action while reinforcing them, but they also facilitate acts of freedom through automatised actions. Ultimately, Preciado demonstrates the plasticity, flexibility and agentic possibility inherent in the creation and maintenance of habits.

Preciado also describes his addiction in terms of habit: he writes of a search for ‘his drug’, and notes that the application of testosterone has ‘ceased to be a simple political test’ and has become simultaneously ‘an addiction, a form of gratification, an escape, a prison, a paradise’ (p. 396). Testosterone, like the formation of a habit, works as a *pharmakon*. A reliance on automation, which recalls the rat frantically pressing a lever and self-administering cocaine, is symptomatic of addiction, which could be defined as recourse to bodily automation. But Preciado describes automatic habits and addiction through plasticity, implying their creative, as well as destructive, potential. Thus, a decrease in plasticity can lead to automation, which is characteristic of addiction, yet Preciado’s addiction to testosterone allows for body plasticity. Accordingly, perhaps addiction and habits map onto

the ground between plasticity and flexibility; his experiments with testosterone, and his recourse to automation and addiction reveal an agentic field of play, implying that addictive habits of all kinds, and their creative and automatic possibilities might act as a precondition for body plasticity. Through habit experimentation, Preciado creates a space which both enables plasticity and flexibility, but more crucially, which expresses desire and agency.

## **Addiction**

This reliance on automation is symptomatic of addiction, which represents recourse to bodily automation. Studies have shown that rats and monkeys become addicted to drugs such as cocaine and heroin in the stressful environment of a lab; Bruce K. Alexander placed rats with other rats, toys and activities and noticed a significant remission. The rats were less interested in drugs when in more pleasant environments and dis-automated their addictive behaviours. Unlike rats, people remain prone to addiction in pleasant environments. In fact, people may be more susceptible to addictive behaviours in comfortable environments. For example, Dow Schüll writes that the job of the casino layout is to ‘suspend walking patrons in a suggestible, affectively permeable state that renders them susceptible to environmental triggers, which are then supplied’ (p. 46). Affective manipulation has become a primary casino function to increase ‘time-on-device’ (p. 46). The environment is subject to subtle alterations: the temperature, colours, light, sound and aromas are calculated to elicit ‘emotional’ or ‘physiological’ reactions from gamblers. These factors ‘powerfully modulate patrons’ according to industry consultants, who use the term ‘casino atmospherics’ to describe their work (p. 46).

Here, casinos represent the apotheosis of pharmacopornography. The casino environment is responsive: able to measure affect and modulate accordingly. The casinos are affective environments analogous to bodies: capable of changing temperature, colour, aroma and producing sound. The casinos also demonstrate bodily affective management under pharmacopornography. ‘Casino atmospherics’ are intended to increase the comfort of patrons, and, through the description above, casinos become prostheses: bodies, gambling machines and casinos blur in order to suspend players in a ‘permeable’ state. Thus, casinos also demonstrate the slippage between bio and techno bodies and environments. Gamblers’ physiological responses are triggered by technological, as well as biological stimuli: physiological and technological responses become indistinguishable through pharmacopornographic affect management.

The chairs in casinos are also designed to increase ‘time-on-device’: a number of casino consultants noted the avoidance of sharp edges to protect the main arteries of the legs – to avoid cutting off circulation or worsening poor circulation. Dow Schüll notes that consultants directly link the blood flow of gamblers to the ‘flow of their time and money into the casino’s machines: ergonomics is economics’ (p. 67). Casino layouts confirm Deleuze’s proposition of a logic of control: in which the dominant form of power is the ‘regulation of continuous mobile flows: of capital, information, bodies and affects’, Dow Schüll writes. Rewards are more powerful than restrictions in the business of retaining casino customers. Chairs, building designs, and manipulated ‘casino atmospherics’ are effective, affective tools capable of increasing bodily automatism and addiction, and, significantly, decreasing body plasticity. The casinos described above demonstrate the use of tools and adoption to decrease body plasticity – the maladaptive side of the *pharmakon*. Equally, addiction appears capable of decreasing plasticity. The casinos also demonstrate addiction as a practice of immersion and identification: the casino chairs become prostheses, integrated with gamblers’ bodies.

Stiegler also writes of maladaptive addiction: in *Mécréance et Discrédit: La décadence des démocraties industrielles*, he writes that addiction annihilates the subject and results in the loss of individuation: addiction effects a process of existence-absorption (2004). But Preciado experiences an intensification of subjectivity and ‘gratification’ in addiction, because the object of addiction moulds to his body, rather than absorbing or annihilating him (p. 237). Stiegler writes that we are formed through tool use, and that our evolution is the evolution of technics; this dependent relationship, between humans and the objects we adopt and with which we evolve, is capable of becoming addictive. But Stiegler often focuses on practices of consumption in relation to addiction: for example, he writes that consumerist societies are ‘*structurellement addictogène*: sous l’impulsion d’Edward Bernays et de la science du marketing, elle a fait du comportement compulsif ou toxicomane du consommateur son modèle’ (2013).

In comparison with Stiegler’s model of addictive consumption, Preciado presents addiction in pornographic terms: ‘the relationship between customer and sex worker is [...] a relationship of spectacle, one involving representation and communication more than consumption. The customer doesn’t consume anything (there is no object or outcome), nothing but a fantasy that is physically or virtually embodied by the worker’ through ‘performance’, which is a ‘dramatization of sexuality whose goal is to trigger the excitation-frustration cycle’ (p. 307). Here, Preciado makes clear that addictive or compulsive

behaviour is not externally imposed, by ‘la science du marketing’, rather, in pharmacopornography, bodies need little convincing (2013). In Preciado’s writing, pharmacopornography is ‘*structurellement addictogène*’, following Stiegler, but the relationship between addict and pharmacopornography is not ‘unidirectional’, according to a ‘dialectical model of domination/oppression’ (2013, pp. 207-208). Pharmacopornography emphasises the centrality of the excitation-frustration cycle in the structure of addiction. ‘Fuck me’ expresses the pharmacopornographic economy, in which bodies both produce and consume their own pleasure, self-regulating in order to trigger the continuation of the excitation-frustration cycle (p. 208).

Stiegler’s summary of addiction and consumption is, at least rhetorically, based on the model of ‘domination and oppression’ (p. 207). Comparatively, Preciado writes that power ‘from the outside’ no longer ‘infiltrates the obedient body of individuals’ (p. 207). Stiegler’s description of addiction ignores the body ‘desiring power’: rather, the body exists in, and submits to, disciplinary spaces (p. 207). Preciado’s theory posits that the body *is* a disciplinary space: techno, prosthetic forms of micro-control have become indistinguishable from bio bodily processes. For Preciado, addiction to testosterone is simultaneously ‘a prison’, ‘a paradise’ and an ‘escape’ (p. 396). In *Testo Junkie*, addiction is capable of activating agency, as well as annihilation or absorption – as Stiegler phrases it (2004).

Plasticity and addiction could both be described as an abandonment to tools and the integration of the body with particular tools. The gambler’s ‘adoption’ is often futile and self-destructive, but it represents a rejection of adaptation in favour of an adopted ‘machine zone’, and the body’s capacity for destructive plasticity (p. 2). Justin Vicari writes that Malabou’s destructive plasticity is fundamentally hopeful and represents the ‘opening up of unprecedented possibilities and survivals’ (2016, p. 27). Similarly, Erving Goffman writes that gambling breaks down barriers between ‘play’ and ‘real life’: ‘games of chance’ are ‘world building activities that rehearse life by immersing us in a demonstration of its possibilities’ (1961, p. 27).

Crucially, addiction and habits map onto the indistinct space between ‘prison’ and ‘paradise’, or plasticity and flexibility (p. 396). Gerald Moore argues that the ‘key’ for drug therapy is to ‘build *pharmaka* that facilitate, rather than inhibit, the construction of alternatives’ (2014). However, he also notes that the abuse of drugs is associated with both escapism and, paradoxically, ‘environmental circumstances that prevent users from envisioning and constructing *alternative* alternatives to those projected from the midst of an environment of addiction’ (2014). Here, Moore cites Deleuze: the aim is always to be ‘un

peu alcoolique’, as he phrases it in *Logique du sens*: a state where the body is capable of accessing possibilities and alternatives, but is resistant to abuse and toxicity (1969, p. 184). Privilege necessarily intersects here: a combination of *pharmaka* and social or economic deprivation can result in abuse and a toxic experience of the *pharmakon*, whereas economic and social privilege clearly enable easier access to its therapeutic form.

In comparison with gambling-as-possibility and plasticity, Dow Schüll writes of one gambler: ‘contradicting the popular understanding of gambling as an expression of the desire to get something for nothing, he claimed to be after nothingness itself’ (p. 12). This ‘nothingness’ and desire to inhabit the ‘machine zone’ could be interpreted as a (dubious and miserable) form of agency: here, addiction is an active means of negation. Prolonged ‘nothingness’ and attachment to the ‘machine zone’ are also in opposition to, although facilitate, ‘extinction’: the term used by gaming executives to describe the desirable end point of a gambler’s play – the elimination of their gambling funds (p. 74). Gambling ‘extinction’ is cruelly named, considering that ‘extinction’ in behavioural psychology is the weakening or termination of a conditioned response. In comparison, gambling ‘extinction’, is perhaps the apex of a gambler’s addiction: the gambler might reach ‘extinction’, but the drive remains. ‘Extinction’ also has evolutionary connotations, signifying the failure of adaptation. Adaptation has been replaced with adoption – here, a destructive form of body plasticity: the addict has developed a mutually adoptive relationship with a slot machine – equally applicable to drugs.

In summary: addiction and habit-formation are capable of both activating and arresting agency. Dow Schüll writes of affect manipulation in relation to gambling and Stiegler notes our collective addiction to consumption. In each, there are objects of addiction and addicted subjects. But *Testo Junkie* examines the integration of the subject with the object of addiction, rather than addiction representing annihilation or absorption. The testosterone Preciado applies to his skin is already present in his body in varying amounts. For Preciado, addiction is a body-extension: testosterone is a prosthesis that becomes indistinguishable from his bio-body. But Preciado’s addiction, and the addictive disposition explored in *Testo Junkie*, encompasses more than testosterone: ‘The Junkie’ examines our cultural addiction to, or enmeshment in, pornographic composition and rhythms – pornography as addictive architecture rather than purely visual stimulation. The chapter also explores addiction and risk, addiction to masculinity, capitalism, voyeurism, and addiction and viscosity. In *Testo Junkie*, addiction is structural rather than societal or individual – it

becomes a framework for understanding the construction of pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

## **Repetition**

Comparable to habits and addiction, repetition demonstrates a way to distinguish between plasticity and flexibility, and to identify indistinct spaces between them. In *Stiegler and Technics*, Martin Crowley writes that ‘the proliferating differences of commercial products offer nothing but the same short-term rhythm. Repeated encounters with the same aesthetic object can, on the contrary, let us experience something different each time’ (Howells and Moore, 2013, p. 137). Crowley defines ‘good repetition’ as a repeat encounter with the same object which results in change and development, rather than accumulation or ‘extinction’ characteristic of a gambler’s repeated interaction with different casino machines. Gamblers in casinos desire a steady pace of play, with regular wins and losses, in order to ensure their continued suspension in the ‘machine zone’: ‘if you win big, it can prevent you from staying in the zone’, Dow Schüll writes (2014, p. 198). Dow Schüll cites Gerda Reith: for gamblers, money is ‘prized not as an end in itself but for its ability to allow continued consumption in repeated play’ (2014, p. 199). ‘Player centric’ gambling machines, which were developed in response to players becoming more adept at easier machines, and craving choices and increased agency in the course of play, are similarly directed towards ‘extinction’ and the ‘same short-term rhythm’ characteristic of ‘bad repetition’.

But these machines are capable of mimicking plastic or ‘good’ repetition; they appear to allow gamblers to improvise and offer the illusion of performative and tactical choices. But, ultimately, these machines are ‘tightly managing game possibilities and channelling motion in one set direction’: ‘extinction’ or ‘self-liquidation’ (p. 179). Dow Schüll notes that these machines offer an ‘entrapping and ultimately annihilating encounter’ rather than an ‘exhilarating, expansive experience’ or the ‘symbiotic union’ envisaged in Haraway’s ‘A Cyborg Manifesto’ (p. 179). Similarly, addiction to gambling mimics a form of body plasticity, if a destructive form, following Malabou: Dow Schüll writes of two gamblers who develop carpal tunnel and only have 15 degrees of motion in their right playing arm due to ‘excessive video poker play’ (p. 180). Their doctor noted that ‘we’re talking about challenging the limits of the human body here when we’re talking about video gambling addictions’ (p. 180). Even though these players are challenging the limits of the

human body and adopting and absorbing technics, they replicate a set of short-term rhythms that result in casino profits and ‘extinction’ for loyal players.

Stiegler’s creative repetition is performed by the amateur, as Crowley notes (p. 137). Stiegler’s amateur is ‘l’*idéal-type* de l’économie de la contribution parce qu’il est celui qui construit lui-même une économie libidinale durable et n’attend pas que la société industrielle le fasse à sa place’.<sup>4</sup> Despite Stiegler’s reference to an economy of contribution, maverick individualism associated with masculinity is discernible here: the cowboy settling new land, rather than waiting for ‘society’ or collectivism. *Testo Junkie* expresses a comparable affinity with the lone hacker or amateur-pioneer: Preciado designs and implements his own gender experiment. Stiegler uses ‘hacker’ interchangeably with ‘amateur’ in the passage described above: ‘le hacker est une figure subversive’ (ibid). Preciado also describes his testosterone dealer as a ‘master gender hacker’ and notes, using the language of hacking, that ‘it will be our responsibility to shift the code to open the political practice to multiple possibilities’ (p. 395). For Preciado, hacking represents resistance and promise (p. 395).

McKenzie Wark’s *Hacker Manifesto* also exemplifies Stiegler’s conception of repetition: Wark writes that ‘to produce is to repeat; to hack, to differentiate’ (2004). Production and repetition are synonymous, but hacking results in differentiation and individuation through creative repetition. Malabou, cited above, writes that plasticity is ‘un régime d’auto organisation systématique qui repose sur la capacité qu’a un organisme à intégrer les modifications qu’il subit et à les modifier en retour’ (2008, p. 111). Thus, bodies must be capable of integrating modifications, but also modifying *those* modifications in order to achieve plasticity: modifications become reinventions rather than repetitions.

Significantly, Crowley notes that ‘good’ repetition is ‘informed’ (p. 129). Stiegler writes that proletarianisation or ‘bestialisation’ is defined as submission to repeated adaptations in conjunction with deprivation of knowledge (2012). Stiegler writes of the historically practical nature of knowledge, incorporated into rites and practices, but concludes that the separation of *logos* (logic/reason) and *tekhne* (technics/practical skills) has resulted in ‘la règne de la bêtise’ (2012, pp. 108-109). For Stiegler, adoption and comprehension of tools and practical skills have been replaced by mindless (mal)adaptation. Following Crowley and Stiegler, ‘good’ repetition, or plasticity, depends on our participation in technics and our ability to use and understand them; ‘bad’ repetition means

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<sup>4</sup> Definition accessed through Ars Industrialis’s website vocabulary section: <<http://arsindustrialis.org/vocabulaire-amateur>>. Bernard Stiegler, accessed 31/05/2018.

the bodily integration of modifications and adaptations without establishing knowledge necessary to continue the process of transformation.

Butler also addresses the potentiality of habit experimentation through analysis of repetition: in *Gender Trouble*, Butler describes how repetition maps onto the ground between plasticity and flexibility and is thus capable of overturning norms: ‘It’s not a question of whether to repeat, but how to repeat, and through a radical proliferation of gender, to displace the very norms that enable repetition itself’ (1999, p. 148). Butler describes the process of disruptive repetition through which, for example, flexibility becomes plasticity. But Butler’s interpretation of performativity here is primarily based on discourse and Austin’s ‘speech acts’. To redress this focus, Butler’s *Bodies That Matter* opens with the following question: ‘Is there a way to *link* the question of the materiality of the body to the performativity of gender?’ (1993, p.1, my italics).

However, Butler continues to describe performativity as ‘that power of discourse to produce effects through reiteration’ (p. 20) and ‘the reiterative power of discourse’ (p. 2). Through considering how to *link* the materiality of the body to gender performativity, Butler rhetorically excludes the possibility that the material body is already practising gender performativity and inhabiting its repetitive processes. Preciado writes that compounds like the contraceptive pill, which mimic ‘normal’ physiological processes, force us to ‘extend Butler’s concept of gender performativity from theatrical imitation and linguistic performative force to living mimicry, the technical imitation of the very materiality of the living being’ (p. 191). Preciado develops a new kind of performativity located in and produced through the body, which he defines as ‘biodrag’: the ‘pharmacopornographic production of somatic fictions of femininity and masculinity’ (p. 191). Biodrag describes a practice of ‘molecular’ performativity through hormone alteration. But, comparable to discourse-based gender performativity, distinguishing between ‘good repetition’ (which can displace norms) and ‘bad repetition’ (which enables them) is difficult.

Ultimately, theories of repetition in relation to plasticity, flexibility and addiction map onto queer theories of reproduction. Preciado’s writing and practice advocate the reproduction of queerness, but reproduction distinct from heteronormative pharmacopornographic imperatives to reproduce. Regulated pharmacopornographic repetition produces ‘somatic fictions’, embodied, material narratives of, for example: sexuality, gender, masculinity and femininity (p. 152). Biopolitical, pharmacopornographic work is defined by repetition and reproduction: ‘jerking off the planetary cock’, the repetitive pornographic rhythm of excitation-frustration (p. 131). In response to the

reproduction of pharmacopornographic bodies, fictions and products, Preciado proffers ‘biodrag’, and drag king workshops – which are similarly composed of repetitive processes (p. 191). He writes of drag king workshops inspired by Merce Cunningham’s ‘chance operations’ – describing the choreographer’s commitment to disordering and improvisation (p. 373). The order of his choreographed sequences would be determined by ‘chance’ (p. 373). Preciado writes that biodrag involves ‘finding a way between norm and improvisation, between repetition and invention’ (p. 373). Thus, constructing masculine fictions is a repetitive, choreographed process. Crucially, Preciado emphasises the importance of biodrag and gender fictions as spaces between norm and improvisation and repetition and invention – or between plasticity and flexibility, adoption and adaptation.

Here, the separation of ‘pharmacology’ and ‘pornography’ in pharmacopornography is helpful. Pornographic repetition: ‘excitation-frustration’ is ‘jerking off the planetary cock’, performing sex work and creating pharmacopornographic products (p. 131). In comparison, biodrag – a combination of performative and pharmacological work, is capable of creating a space for new ‘fictions’ – between plasticity and flexibility. Pharmacological repetition or reproduction, according to Preciado, allows bodies and fictions to escape dominant pornographic rhythms and work. Preciado writes of the ‘drag king virus’ being ‘triggered’ and spreading to ‘daily life, causing modifications within social interactions’ (p. 373). Biodrag effects Crowley and Stiegler’s ‘good repetition’ here: modification as reinvention rather than repetition. Later chapters further explore Preciado’s commitment to, and rejection of, queer futurity through José Esteban Muñoz and Lee Edelman, his engagement with the reproduction of queerness, and through biodrag, his creation of spaces between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ repetition which allow the proliferation of different kinds of pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

## **Vulnerability**

Butler writes that we are inevitably vulnerable to repetitive norms: in a talk on ‘Rethinking vulnerability and resistance’, she notes the importance of theorizing the body through its dependence: on infrastructure, the environment, social relations and economic means of support (2014). Butler argues that we should emphasise the ways in which we are vulnerable, to one another, and communally (2014). Exposing ourselves as vulnerable is not about ‘shoring up paternalistic power’ but rejecting a purely ‘agentic’ perspective of political resistance (2014). Butler writes that we oppose vulnerability and prefer to view

ourselves as agents, but we are ‘invariably acted upon’ as well as acting (2014). In comparison, Preciado’s narrative and theory are galvanized by certainty, perceived agency and potency: he writes of ‘pharmacopornographic emancipation’ (p. 129) and gleefully boasts that his drug abuse can never be controlled: ‘how can such trafficking – the microdiffusion of minute drops of sweat, the importing and exporting of vapors, such contraband exhalations – be controlled, surveyed’ (p. 65). But Preciado is also vulnerable: to supply and demand of the drug, his ‘gender-hacker’ dealer and the pharmaceutical companies producing testosterone.

Butler’s writing on vulnerability is useful in relation to Preciado’s assertion of agency: she questions whether vulnerability is negated when it converts to agency in the process of ‘dismantling’ processes of subjugation, or whether it assumes a ‘different form’ (2014). Butler also writes that opposing vulnerability on the basis of desiring agency, or visualising ourselves as agentic, implies that we prefer to view ourselves as ‘only acting, but not acted upon’ (2014). Understanding vulnerability involves acknowledging our environmental relationality, and the inevitability of being ‘acted upon’. Butler also criticises the ‘masculinist ideal’ of ‘a political subject that establishes its agency by vanquishing its vulnerability’ (2014).

Initially, *Testo Junkie* appears concerned with the task of ‘vanquishing’ vulnerability and femininity in the process of establishing agency, in the model of Butler’s ‘masculinist ideal.’ Anne Pasek notes that ‘Preciado is drawn towards the position of hegemonic masculinity on a visual and hormonal level’ (2015). Preciado describes the Pill in terms of colonialism, coercion and slavery; Testogel is glorified through its relation to aggression, strength and sexual excitement. Vulnerability is undesirable and opposed to agency. Cis and trans women are either absent or politically and sexually impotent in *Testo Junkie*, epitomising Butler’s ‘dismantling’ of vulnerability in order to assert (trans) masculine agency.

Preciado writes a glowing review of taking testosterone for the first time: ‘an extraordinary lucidity settles in, gradually, accompanied by the desire to fuck, walk, go out everywhere in the city [...] the feeling of being in perfect harmony with the rhythm of the city’ (p. 21). Here, Preciado negates vulnerability in the process of claiming agency and ‘dismantling’ his subjugation as a woman, or gender fluid. Perhaps his sense of comfort or security expressed through the ‘desire to fuck, walk, go out everywhere in the city’ also represents a denial of previously felt vulnerability (p. 295). Preciado feels newly ‘in perfect harmony’ with the city when taking testosterone, implying vulnerability associated with his

previous identification as a woman. Later in *Testo Junkie*, Preciado watches a film of a woman masturbating in which a hairy arm intermittently intrudes to fondle her; Preciado worries that he will transform into a ‘hairy arm’, and accept his ‘pharmacopornographic’, masculine role – the manipulator and the possessor, rather than object of, the sexual gaze.

However, Preciado does present his embodiment and testo-project as relational: Butler writes that we must understand ‘embodiment as both performative and relational’ (2014, p. 11). Butler expresses her conception of vulnerability through relationality and relational ontology: she writes of the necessity of theorising the body through its dependency in opposition to individualism, and conceptions of the subject as autonomous (p. 11). Butler also defines vulnerability through relationality in a description of otherness: ‘When we recognise another, or when we ask for recognition for ourselves, we are not asking for an Other to see us as we are, as we already are, as we always have been, as we were constituted prior to the encounter itself. Instead, in the asking, in the petition, we have already become something new, since we are constituted by virtue of the address’ (2006, p. 44). Here, the process of subjectification is dependent, vulnerable and relational. Equally, Preciado shares videos and images of his experimentation with testosterone online with a trans community – acknowledging his vulnerability, if anonymously, and admitting the relationality of his project. Preciado publishes *Testo Junkie*, a trans, body-hacking manual – representative of subjectification through shared readership. His subject construction is inevitably relational – recent articles for *Libération* explicitly ask for recognition: for example, Preciado requests to be called Paul rather than Beatriz, affirming the relationality of his transition.

## **Complicity**

But, through *Testo Junkie*, Preciado reworks Butler’s commitment to vulnerable relationality. Preciado intensifies Butlerian performativity into biodrag, a process described in ‘The Drag King’; similarly, Preciado intensifies relationality into pharmacopornographic complicity. In *Bodies That Matter*, Butler writes of ‘originary complicity with power’: agency is ‘immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power’ (p. 15). Butler writes that the subject who wants to resist norms is inevitably enabled or produced by the same norms – which is the ‘paradox of subjectivation’ (p. 15). Both Butler and Preciado agree that wherever performativity is located and produced, it remains immanent to power. Butler also writes that embodiment is performative and relational. However,

Butler's discourse of relationality is distinct from omnipresent pharmacopornographic complicity – which Preciado explores.

The term 'relational' implies connection, whereas 'complicit' means 'folded together', deriving from *complice*, meaning accomplice, companion or comrade. 'Complicit' is also pejorative, connoting, for example, legal or moral objections. 'Complicit' also implies choice – choice not necessarily present in inevitable relationality. *Testo Junkie* examines how the body 'chooses' to imbibe power. Preciado loosely paraphrases Spinoza: 'why do people always desire their own slavery?' (p. 208).<sup>5</sup> Preciado acknowledges Spinoza's influence in a footnote, writing that his conception of orgasmic force was derived from Spinoza's 'power of action or force of existing' in *Ethics* (p. 41). Evidently, Preciado's writing is also influenced by Spinozan theories of desire: Spinoza wrote that we 'judge something to be good because we strive for it, will it, want it, and desire it', rather than striving for something because we deem it to be good (1667, Book 3). Jason Read summarises Spinoza: 'Desire is mankind's essence, but this essence is less a universal, some shared quality, than it is the facticity of our relations and history' (2014). Similarly, Frédéric Lordon writes that Spinoza proposes that, rather than alienation or free will: 'Les véritables chaînes sont celles de nos affects et de nos désirs. La servitude volontaire n'existe pas. Il n'y a que la servitude passionnelle. Mais elle est universelle.' (2010, p. 3). Equally, Preciado's writing foregrounds complicity in order to examine our affective, desire-driven relationship with pharmacopornography.

Lordon and Read, following Spinoza, emphasise the historical, relational and affective nature of desire, but Preciado foregrounds our bodily complicity with these modes of power. 'Complicity' implies our willingness to 'fight' for, and desire pharmacopornographic capitalism: Preciado's writing examines how and why we bodily *desire* our 'servitude passionnelle' (2010, p. 3). But through complicity with pharmacopornography (exemplified by his use of Testogel), Preciado also shifts theories of desire from macro-analytic treatises on servitude and alienation, to bodies, and microprosthetic theory and practice.

Complicity, or 'closeness' is also a common feature of contemporary political protest. Carrie Smith-Prei and Maria Stehle encapsulate this 'closeness' in a form of politics they describe as 'awkward' (2016). They write that the 'awkward' closeness of protests and

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<sup>5</sup> Specifically, rather than lamenting our desire for slavery, Spinoza writes in *Tractatus Theologico Politicus* that, if kept in a state of deception, people will 'fight for their servitude as if for salvation' (*TTP*, Pref, 3).

their object can be politically productive. Smith-Prei and Stehle examine digital campaigns and counter-campaigns which use the same image or hashtag to ‘subvert the original message’ (p. 77). They reference a campaign in which women held up boards explaining their identification with feminism: ‘I am a feminist because...’. This campaign provoked an awkwardly close: ‘I am not a feminist because...’ counter protest, using the same image and format.

Smith-Prei and Stehle observe the ‘awkward’ relationship between the campaigns: they rely on each other to promote their message, ‘thereby destabilising the effectivity of both’ (p. 124). But, equally, they note that the counter-campaign’s co-option of the format augments the visibility of both campaigns ‘without voiding the political meaning of either, the controversy adds affect and urgency to both’ (p. 124). The authors add that digital protests using hashtags and images are often close and productively awkward, and more popular than distancing-techniques (p. 123). During the last US presidential campaign, Donald Trump bragged on tape about being a ‘star’: ‘Grab ‘em by the pussy. You can do anything.’ In response, women shared experiences of sexual assault with the hashtag: #PussyGrabsBack. #PussyGrabsBack encouraged women to vote, specifically against Trump, using Trump’s own unpleasant rhetoric.

Despite its inherent complicity, this ‘awkward’ closeness is inventive and effective. Preciado is embedded in this form of ‘awkward politics’ through his acknowledged complicity, or closeness, with pharmacological, capitalist and trans masculine structures. Preciado writes that each worker is ‘penetrable-penetrating’, that we are all ‘a productive or dependent toxicological platform. Or both. [...] all bodies are at the same time toxic drug and addicted subject, fit and crip, organic and supplemented by technology’ (p. 302). Preciado describes himself as ‘both the terminal of one of the apparatuses of neoliberal governmentality and the vanishing point through which escapes the system’s power to control’ (p. 140). Preciado’s somatic project is embedded in contemporary capitalism, but also appears both resistant and inventive.

Malabou’s distinction between plasticity and flexibility is helpful in relation to Preciado’s testo-project, but, in comparison with Preciado, her writing rejects what Butler describes as ‘originary complicity’ (2014, p. 15). For example: Malabou writes that the brain is interchangeably described as ‘flexible’ and ‘plastic’; she contends that flexibility aligns with capitalist exhortations to adaptability and mobility – of labour and capital, while plasticity indicates the possibility of creation and disruption. Flexible brains can only be moulded, while plastic brains are capable of moulding. Equally, Malabou writes that

naturalising conceptions of the ‘flexible’ brain reinforces the dominant structure of contemporary capitalism. Malabou’s insistence that we must ‘refuser d’être [...] flexible’ represents a denial of the resistant possibility of awkward closeness, or complicity (p. 78). Malabou rhetorically romanticises plasticity, while failing to acknowledge its complicit potential – or its slippage into flexibility.

Ultimately, Malabou’s theorisation of plasticity is relational rather than complicit: she writes that plasticity is ‘un facteur de désobéissance à toute forme constituée’ (p. 6). But plasticity is defined through its opposition to, and thus inevitable affinity with, flexibility. Malabou writes that we must ‘refuser d’être les individus flexibles’, self-modifying ‘au gré des flux’ (p. 78). But Malabou’s definition of plasticity, and its strength, are derived from its antagonistic relationship with flexibility. In comparison with Preciado, Malabou rhetorically denies the existence of a complicit space between plasticity and flexibility. *Testo Junkie* is galvanised by complicity and the possibility of slippage, whereas Malabou’s writing aggrandises plasticity.

Malabou similarly denies a transitional, awkward space when she writes on synapses. Malabou writes that selfhood is defined through synapses, emphasising that we can harness our brainpower (p. 58). But Malabou omits analysis of the synapse as a liminal space. ‘Synapse’ derives from two Greek words meaning ‘together’ and ‘clasp’: ‘syn’ and ‘haptein’, and synapses are structured to enable communication (of electrical and chemical signals). Preciado’s contribution, then, is to supplement Malabou’s analysis. Conversely, Malabou’s peeling apart of plasticity and flexibility, through her analysis of the contemporary predilection for conflating the two terms, enables my elaboration of the agentic liminal space of *Testo Junkie*.

Stiegler’s juxtaposition of adoption and adaptation maps onto Malabou’s discussion of the terms ‘plastic’ and ‘flexible’ in relation to the brain. For Stiegler, ‘adaptation’ is passive and dehumanising in its expedient abandonment of *tekhne* (technics) and practical knowledge. In comparison, ‘adoption’, of tools, systems and knowledge, according to Stiegler, is creative and inventive – rather than representative of a pattern of repetition and abortive resistance. Furthermore: for Stiegler, recent French thought has affirmed adaptation (aligned with contemporary capitalism) through developing an ‘ethos of resistance’: confirming that ‘there is no alternative’ but to ‘reconcile ourselves with the nature of capitalism’, Moore writes (Howells and Moore, 2013, p. 18). For Stiegler, French thought has ‘bordered on complicity’ with capitalist narratives (p. 18). Moore cites Stiegler, who writes that we must ‘break with the discourse of resistance through the question of invention’

(p. 18). In Stiegler's conception, naturalising adaptation and suppressing adoptive techniques results in the impossibility of envisaging and constructing different futures. In comparison, adoption is capable of invention. Here, rhetorically at least, Stiegler's theory appears to negate complicit forms of invention. For Malabou and Stiegler, creation, resistance and invention are free of muddying complicity.

However, Stiegler does write about the importance of re-appropriating and hacking contemporary technologies, taking control of the digital *pharmakon* (2010, p. 48). McKenzie Wark writes that 'every production is a hack formalised and repeated on the basis of its representation' (2004). He also writes of hacking as 'resistance' and 'friction' (2004). Crucially, friction implies contact: hacking is inevitably complicit. Ultimately, Stiegler's theorisation of tragic composition is helpful here: the *pharmakon's* nourishing adoptive processes co-exist with, rather than eliminate, its toxic, adaptive force. Despite Stiegler's rhetorical avoidance of complicity-through-adaptation, his *pharmakon* epitomises awkward closeness.

But Stiegler and Butler theorise subjectification, power and agency as extrinsic movements: from individualism to collectivism, or 'I' to 'we'. Stiegler writes that individuation is a collective movement, in comparison with individualism or consumerism (2011). In *Bodies*, Butler writes that power 'cannot be conflated with [...] individualism and consumerism, and in no way presupposes a choosing subject (p. 15)'. In *Gender Trouble*, she also writes of the importance of understanding and theorising vulnerability and performativity collectively.

In comparison, Preciado understands subjectification as a complicit process, and a movement inwards. Preciado writes that disciplinary systems are 'gradually filtering into the individual body' and experiments can now 'be carried out at home, in the various enclave of the individual body, under the watchful intimate supervision of the individual herself' (p. 206). In place of coercive laws, bodies are self-regulating and self-controlled. In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado writes that we are 'treated as producers and consumers of organs, flux, neurotransmitters, as supporters and effects of a biopolitical program' (p. 211). Stiegler and Butler's theorisation of resistance through collectivism presumes macro-control. In comparison, Preciado writes that individual bodies are the matrix of pharmacopornographic micro-control and self-control. In Butler's phrasing, agency is immanent to power. Thus, according to Preciado, the individual body, the site of power, is also the site of agency-formation.

Complicity in Preciado is also a practice, synonymous with infiltration. For example, *Testo Junkie* describes Preciado's awkward closeness to masculinity and pharmacopornographic capitalism. But this complicity could also be framed as infiltration: Preciado is engaged in injecting masculinity with an inevitably vulnerable/queer/ trans politics. Preciado writes that cis-women could be persuaded to take testosterone, their hormonal experimentation effecting the infiltration of masculinity (p. 210). Thus, Preciado's practice of complicity can also be framed as an injection of vulnerability. Butler wonders whether vulnerability is negated in its conversion to agency, which is effected in the process of 'dismantling' marginalisation, or whether it takes a 'different form' (1993, p. 12). Perhaps *Testo Junkie* represents the exploration of a 'different form' of agency, rather than the negation of vulnerability (p. 12).

Thus, vulnerability and complicity are intertwined in *Testo Junkie*. Vulnerability and complicity both imply mutuality and a position of proximity: complicity meaning folded together, and vulnerable meaning wounded. Preciado's status as a trans man, subject to an illegal supply of Testogel, is both vulnerable to and complicit with pharmacopornographic economies. Preciado's complicity can be redrawn as vulnerability to the pharmacopornographic economy he describes. Indeed, recent French thought, which Stiegler posits is often complicit with capitalist narratives, is also inevitably in a position of vulnerability and awkward 'closeness' to its object of resistance. Ultimately, for Preciado, vulnerability combined with complicity, as a practice of infiltration, is capable of enhancing the possibility of agency. Butler's conception of vulnerability is predominantly relational, but Preciado explores its bodily combination with complicity.

## **Permeability**

Thus, Preciado develops a 'different form' of agency, which combines complicity and vulnerability, which I will define as 'permeability.' In comparison with the dichotomy of vulnerability and invulnerability, Preciado's narrative is founded on the exchange of bodies, fluids and theories. Rather than rejecting Butler's theory of vulnerability-as-resistance, Preciado develops permeability: a process of exchange, rather than imposition and resistance. Butler's writing destabilises the binary of vulnerability and agency; Preciado refutes the binary of vulnerability and potency. Permeability derives from 'permeabilis', meaning 'that can be passed through', unlike vulnerability, which implies a wound that concludes at the point of bodily contact. Permeable also stems from the Proto Indo-European

root \*mei, meaning ‘to change’ or ‘mutable’. Thus: permeability encapsulates the mutable quality of plasticity. Permeability describes a process of plastic exchange, in comparison with vulnerability: vulnerability is receptive, permeability is reactive. Receptive implies openness; in comparison, reactive implies responsive change.

The permeable body is plastic, and defined by mutations. My conception of ‘permeability’ in *Testo Junkie* refers specifically to bodies, and fuses Stieglerian ‘adoption’, practice, learning and exchange with Malabou’s plasticity and Butler’s vulnerability. Malabou writes of change: ‘exister, c’est pouvoir changer de différence en respectant la différence de changement: différence entre un changement continu, sans limites, sans aventure, sans négativité et un changement formateur, qui en effet raconte une histoire effective et précède par ruptures, conflits, dilemmes’ (2005, pp. 159-160). Permeability, formative change, similarly proceeds through negation: ‘ruptures, conflits, dilemmes’ characteristic of body plasticity, and is capable of differentiation and individuation (pp. 159-160). Significantly, Malabou aligns her conception of plasticity with negativity. Benjamin Noys writes of Preciado’s affinity with accelerationism, which a later chapter will explore, but, ultimately, *Testo Junkie*’s theorisation of permeability is defined by tension, negativity and mourning.

Crucially, Preciado’s theory of permeable bodies is explored through his connection to the AIDS crisis. Preciado dedicates his testosterone project to Guillaume Dustan: ‘I do it to avenge your death’ (p. 16). Elliot Evans writes that Preciado ‘seeks to harness the urgency of anti-AIDS activism during the late 1980s, a time when the vulnerability of bodies was all too evident’ (2015, p. 138). In comparison with vulnerability, Preciado presents queer permeability as healthy and necessary, rather than dangerous. Preciado’s project opposes his permeable skin to vulnerable bodies unknowingly incorporated into ‘pharmacopornography’, but also opposes his body to bodies affected by HIV or AIDS. My chapter on ‘biodrag’ examines Preciado’s writing on HIV and AIDS in relation to Dustan, his engagement with theories of infection, and his performative practice.

Demonstrated above, Preciado extends Butler’s work on performativity and vulnerability, but queer permeability in Preciado also refers to the relationship between language and bodies, explicitly following Butler: theories are capable of permeating the body like Testogel. Preciado writes about blending Butler’s work on performativity with Haraway’s work on the body in order to ‘push the performative hypothesis further into the body, as far as its organs and fluids; drawing it into the cells, chromosomes, and genes’ (p. 110). Preciado illustrates the potential permeability of Butler’s theory of performativity,

describing its metaphorical synthesis with the body: perhaps a queer politics can be absorbed through the skin like testosterone. In *Testo Junkie*, queer rhetoric is capable of penetration and permeation. Amorphous queerness is made material, through Preciado's emphasis on the physical products of pharmacopornographic subjectivity. These products include, for example: serotonin, blood, testosterone, sperm or Viagra.

Butler has also used the terms and phrases 'permeability' and 'permeable bodies', but interchangeably with 'vulnerable' and 'open'. In relation to HIV, Butler writes of the perceived dangers portrayed by 'homophobic signifying systems' that 'permeable bodily boundaries present to the social order' (1990, p. 32). Elsewhere, Butler writes of the 'language of permeability' in relation to 9/11: 'referring to the permeability of national borders, drawing upon anxieties of being entered against one's will, the invasion of bodily boundaries' (2015, p. 118). But Butler writes that the body's permeability is a 'condition that can only be managed but not escaped' (p. 118). In comparison, Preciado identifies its powerful potential: permeable bodies and processes of exchange represent engagement with the mechanisms of pharmacopornography.

Ultimately, 'permeability' is intrinsic to Preciado's body-project: 'a philosophy that doesn't use the body as an active platform of technovital transformation is spinning neutral. Ideas aren't enough [...] only art working together with biopolitical praxis can move' (p. 359). This combination of vulnerability and complicity identified by Preciado is capable of forming agency. As Butler notes, it is important to understand 'how vulnerability enters into agency' (2014). And permeability is queered through its affinity with the politicised bodies of the AIDS crisis: Preciado's 'ideas aren't enough' recalls 'with 42,000 dead, art is not enough', a slogan of ACT UP New York, an AIDS advocacy group. According to Preciado, art and philosophy are insufficiently productive: the body must be galvanized into working with 'ideas' and theories, or used as a platform for their execution. Preciado also writes that the temptation of philosophy is the established head/body binary, but wonders whether philosophy's real potential lies in 'the lucid and intentional practice of autodecapitation?' (p. 424) Thus, Preciado's theory emphasises practice: in comparison with vulnerability, queer permeability is praxis, or the precondition for praxis.

Preciado stakes out an agentic space between plasticity and flexibility, and inside theories of 'resistance': inside Butler's espousal of vulnerability-as-resistance or Malabou's romanticisation of plasticity. Butler writes that she has 'proposed [...] to understand embodiment as both performative and relational' (2014, p. 11). Following Butler, Preciado intensifies performative and relational embodiment in order to produce 'biodrag', or

molecular performativity, which expresses bodily complicity with pharmacopornographic capitalism.

Complicity centres permeability: our complicity with violence and power, and its relationship with mourning. In her work on precarity and mourning, Butler writes that she proposes discussing political life that relates to loss, mourning and our ‘exposure to violence and our complicity in it’ (2006, p. 19). Butler writes that Freud considered successful mourning to involve ‘incorporation’ (p. 142). Indeed, in ‘Mourning and Melancholia’, Freud writes: ‘The ego wants to incorporate this object into itself and in accordance with the oral or cannibalistic phase of libidinal development in which it is, it wants to do so by devouring it’ (1917, pp. 249-250). Preciado’s writing is galvanised by the loss of his friend and a process of bodily mourning which resembles incorporation. For Preciado, Testogel is a synthetic substance symbolic of Dustan: ritualistically applying testosterone to his skin while mourning his friend resembles incorporation. But *Testo Junkie* represents a posthuman intensification of incorporation: incorporation for a cyborg age. Here, permeability is a practice of mourning. But permeability is also a violent practice, expressed through Freud’s emphasis on ‘devouring’ (pp. 249-250). Preciado consumes Dustan’s theory and body: he infiltrates masculinity, deconstructs Dustan’s queer ‘snuff’ politics and effects a process of bodily transformation – through Dustan.

Freud writes of an ‘oral’ phase of mourning and libidinal development; Preciado similarly writes of pharmacopornography’s specifically oral and penetrable dominant manifestations: ‘pills’, ‘food’, ‘fellatio’, ‘double penetration’ – which all ‘share the same relationship between the body and power: a desire for infiltration, absorption, total occupation’ (pp. 35; 207). In comparison, permeability, despite sharing a desire for infiltration and absorption, is distinct from penetrability. Permeability expresses an openness to liquid, sticky, slippery exchanges, rather than reinforcing phallocentrism through an emphasis on penetration, holes and spaces. But, as ‘The Sex Worker’ will examine, in *Testo Junkie*, access to permeability is often gendered and restricted.

Butler’s writing reveals Preciado’s masculinist assertion of agency in opposition to vulnerability, but Preciado’s writing reveals contemporary theoretical attachments to rhetorical and philosophical binaries. For example: in her writing on vulnerability, Butler refers to how ‘discourse and power were imposed upon us in ways we never chose’ and configures mobilised vulnerability as straightforward ‘resistance’ (2014, p. 15). In comparison, Preciado affirms how the body relates to power: ‘it is not power infiltrating from the outside, it is the body desiring power, seeking to swallow it, eat it, administer it,

wolf it down, more, always more, through every hole, by every possible route of application. Turning oneself into power' (p. 208). Or, in summary: 'fuck me' (p. 208). Permeability expresses choosing and imbibing power, rather than the imposition and resistance of external power. Malabou romanticises plasticity-as-resistance and Butler similarly advocates vulnerability-as-resistance, but Preciado reminds the reader that we are complicit not only in an ordinary way, but in an ongoing, 'fuck me', desperate, irresolvable way. Agency can be accessed through 'permeability', a combination of vulnerability and acknowledged complicity with power structures, figures and objects.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude: Preciado's rats are symbolic of our vulnerability to, and complicity with, pharmacopornography. 'Rat People' are complicit: they are desirous of perpetual pleasure offered by the 'machine zone'; they demonstrate the relationship between plasticity and addiction, and how habits map onto the liminal space between plasticity and flexibility. Pharmacopornography is dependent on complicity, vulnerability, plasticity and addiction, which rats embody. But rats also represent experimentation, in Preciado's case, self-experimentation and the formation of disruptive, destructively plastic habits. They are also, crucially, permeable: their skinned bodies in 'Peau du rat' represent their exposure: their awkward openness to exchanges of drugs and theories. Importantly, rats are associated with witches, amateurs and cyborgs, figures developed further in later chapters.

The following chapters will examine voyeurism, sex work, drag and 'biodrag', addiction, and accelerationism through a series of pharmacopornographic characters: 'The Voyeur', 'The Sex Worker', 'The Biodrag King' and 'The Junkie'. Pharmacopornography proceeds by proliferation of subjectivity, specifically subjectivity characterised by addiction and permeability – in relation to gender, capitalism, bodies, drugs, sex and sexuality. Pharmacopornographic agency is accessible between 'autocontrol' and 'autoextermination', adoption and adaptation, habit and addiction, and plasticity and flexibility (p. 208).

Crucially, these pharmacopornographic figures are complicit: 'fuck me' expresses a desire for power. Pharmacopornographic subjectivity is examined from the following premise: 'biopower doesn't infiltrate from the outside. It already dwells inside' (p. 208). Pharmacopornographic subversion and invention begin 'inside': the following chapters trace the pharmacopornographic movement inwards, from the gaze directed inside the home in Preciado's *Pornotopia*, to the relationship between blood, sweat, sperm, testosterone and

subjectification. Agency is limited by pharmacopornographic self-control, but Preciado's testo-experiments and exploration of drag represent productive points of intervention. Ultimately, for Preciado, the body is simultaneously the site of complicity and pornographic subjection, and the structure for pharmacopornographic agency.

José Esteban Muñoz writes of 'working on and against' which represents neither 'bucking under the pressures of dominant ideology' in processes of identification and assimilation nor 'attempting to break free of its inescapable sphere' through utopianism (1999, p. 11). For Muñoz, 'working on and against' represents 'labouring to enact permanent structural change, while at the same time valuing the importance of local or everyday struggles of resistance' (p. 11). Crucially, in Preciado's work, this means cultural transformation 'on' pharmacopornography. 'Working on' implies physical proximity to a tangible landscape ('dominant ideology'), and 'against' clarifies his allegiance. The juxtaposition of 'on' and 'against' exemplifies Preciado's complicit practice, and the matrix of his microprosthetic, micropolitical pharmacopornographic work.

## The Voyeur

‘*Playboy* brought men indoors, it made it ok for men to stay inside and play’

(*Pornotopia* 2014, p. 30).

Preciado’s *Pornotopia* (2014), previously his PhD thesis for Princeton’s School of Architecture, represents his first sustained development of ‘pharmacopornography’, the galvanising philosophy of *Testo Junkie* premised on the combined influence of pharmacology and pornography. In the context of pharmacopornography, *Pornotopia* explores how architecture is capable of constructing bodies, subjectivities and fictions of gender and sexuality, rather than merely enhancing or projecting them. For Preciado, architectonic embodiment and pharmacopornographic capitalism produce and reinforce each other. And according to *Pornotopia*, the *Playboy* empire led the charge, constructing a mutable brand of male subjectivity through a combination of furniture, architecture, sex and theatricality. Rather than acting as a titillating ‘diversion from the anxieties of the atomic age’, as Hugh Hefner described it, *Playboy* developed a new form of gendered and sexualised performance that illustrates the significance of both pharmacopornography and architectonic embodiment to contemporary capitalism (2014, p. 36).

In *La Poétique de l’espace*, five years after the first publication of *Playboy*, Gaston Bachelard writes that the childhood home ‘abrite la rêverie, la maison protège le rêveur, la maison nous permet de rêver en paix’ (1957, p. 34). The house is a ‘un grand berceau’ and decidedly maternal: ‘La vie commence bien, elle commence enfermée, protégée, toute tiède dans le giron de la maison’ (p. 35). The house cradles, shelters and protects, acting as a womb. But Bachelard’s nostalgic description of the house is deconstructed in *Pornotopia*, where the house becomes a stage for gender performance, and space of rigorous control and surveillance, opening out, rather than clutching inhabitants to its warm bosom. Most significantly, the house becomes an observatory: *Pornotopia* is about watching and being watched, and this chapter will examine the importance of voyeurism in *Pornotopia*, and its contribution to pharmacopornography.

## Voyeurism

The centrality of voyeurism to *Playboy* philosophy is introduced through Preciado's initial comparison of Hugh Hefner with the architect, Le Corbusier. Preciado describes a photograph in which Hefner is posing next to a model of a building, echoing photos of Le Corbusier: he writes that Hefner 'seems intent on setting up a privileged connection to the building. His body turns towards the model, his arms embrace it, suggesting bonds of creation between the two' (p. 15). But he is also depicted peering in through the building's windows, foreshadowing his magazine's incitement to voyeurism. His *gaze* also establishes a 'privileged connection' to the building, and implies that the 'bonds of creation between the two' are visually constructed (p. 15). Preciado writes that Hugh Hefner chose the title 'Stag Party' before '*Playboy*', referencing groups of men watching pornography; Preciado adds that Hefner 'claimed allegiance to these porn screening sessions, positioning the magazine within the tradition of 'for men only' voyeurism' (p. 41). Preciado notes that a new 'disciplinary space was invented, paradoxically dedicated to the production of pleasure and subjectivity through vision' (p. 41). 'Disciplinary' refers to Foucauldian power over bodies, and 'pleasure and subjectivity' refers to the pharmacopornographic production of pleasure, bodies and people. Dispersed disciplinary power in Foucault's conception involves controlling bodies and behaviour with a variety of different techniques, and often spatially: 'la discipline ne peut s'identifier ni avec une institution ni avec un appareil; elle est un type de pouvoir' (p. 217). Above, 'paradoxically' expresses the conflation, or co-existence of the pharmacopornographic and disciplinary regimes: disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power mesh in the 'stag party' space. Crucially, this space is defined as a 'viewing' space, emphasising the importance of 'watching' to *Playboy* and pharmacopornography. The 'stag party space' also makes visible the interplay of pharmacopornographic and disciplinary power.

However, due to copyright problems, 'Stag Party' became '*Playboy*', and the stag mascot, drawn with a pipe and smoking jacket, became a playful rabbit. Preciado writes that this shift was also a response to the 'cultural transformation' of the fifties (p. 46). The 'grown-up figure of the stag was replaced with the childish image of the rejuvenated, playful, excitable, domestic bunny subjectivity' (p. 46) Preciado concludes that 'forms of power and modes of relating were mutating from 'big game' to 'small game' hunting' (p. 46). The stag represented the traditional husband, aspiring to secure a 'big trophy, a wife that would last forever', in comparison with the 'amoral rabbit subjectivity, which derived

less pleasure from the actual capture than from chasing multiple little pieces' (p. 46). According to Preciado, the stag signified morality and marriage, while the rabbit embodied the potential of sexual affairs and 'small game' hunting. But the replacement of the stag and the title, 'Stag Party', also implies the fragmentation and mutation of voyeurism. The stag party constructs a private viewing space for 'men-only' voyeurism; the stag's marriage is separate from his amoral, pornographic, strictly visual adventures. In comparison, the playful rabbit acts on his voyeuristic impulses, and no longer confines voyeurism to stag parties. The mutation from the stag to the rabbit suggests that voyeurism has 'gone public': *Playboy* exposes voyeurism, and the political and erotic strength of voyeuristic impulses. Here, again, the exposure of voyeurism represents the juxtaposition of disciplinary and pharmacopornographic: the disciplinary, by virtue of exposure, becomes the pharmacopornographic.

Preciado describes this exposure of voyeurism as the 'production and capitalisation of privacy' through the 'publication of visual and narrative fictions of private life' (p. 54). This capitalisation encapsulated the 'blurring of the Fordist distance between labour and sexuality, publicity and privacy' (p. 53). Power and technology associated with the Second World War infiltrated into the home in the 1950s, and suburban homes transformed from private to public spaces, emphasising the economic shift from production to consumption. Private lives and spaces became significant centres of economic growth. Thus, the centrality of the voyeur's gaze to *Playboy* and pharmacopornography was timely: society was directing its gaze inwards. Following Christian Marazzi and Maurizio Lazzarato, Preciado writes that private life (domesticity, the body, communication) entered into the 'productive economy' (pp. 53-54). Preciado also notes that 'intimacy [...] was to the pharmacopornographic economy what the car had been to Fordism: the serial product of a process of immaterial production' (p. 54).

Immaterial production refers to Lazzarato's theory of 'immaterial labour', developed by theorists such as Antonio Negri, which describes labour and production that are not materially evident, for example: affective, digital or open-source work. 'Intimacy' is immaterial, but *Playboy* capitalises on its economic significance, harnessing its power through the depiction of a suburban home characterised by sexualised domesticity and eroticised architecture. Preciado writes: 'Pornography was not so much about unclothing the body, but rather about the possibility of constructing a visual fiction that enabled a reader to eroticise everyday architecture: to see what was happening behind a stranger's windows, to view through opaque walls, to peek into hidden interiors' (p. 59). Here, visual fictions are

powerful: with the aid of visual fictions, the voyeur makes visible ‘hidden interiors’, and, through his gaze, domestic, ‘everyday’ spaces are eroticised (p. 59).

And this ‘visual fiction’ extended beyond pornography: Beatriz Colomina writes that the Cold War American home was literally ‘mobilized’ against foreign enemies: the TV was on wheels, temporary partitions were used in place of walls, and other convenient aids increased household ‘mobility and efficiency’ (1994, p. 14). This equipment was not only produced by the factories that previously manufactured missiles, but the ‘house itself was defending the nation’ (p. 14). The ‘good life’ was the ‘main weapon in the Cold War’; and ‘appliances rather than missiles’ represented the ‘strength of a nation’ (p. 16). ‘Politics had moved to the domestic space’ and American superiority was based on the country’s abundance of modern appliances (p. 16). Colomina asserts that ‘the suburban home, with its many different kinds of washing machines to choose from, represented nothing less than American freedom’ (p. 16). Colomina also writes of the displacement of the public domain indoors: the home became an open, public space.

But if the public world entered the home, through radios and televisions, private lives were also liable to be exported. Homes and private lives were more visible, and were encouraged to be more visible, as symbols of American freedom and strength. Accordingly, the public production of intimacy in various forms was assured, along with an incitement to public aspiration and voyeurism. The moveable nature of mobilised TVs and walls also symbolises the fluidity of the emergent pharmacopornographic era, in contrast with the perceived fixity (connoting conservatism) of the disciplinary regime. In pharmacopornography, power is fluid and multi-directional, and ‘everyday’ items can be weaponised.

Thus, although the ‘capitalisation of privacy’ enabled the public consumption of voyeurism in different forms, voyeurism became more complex, in contrast with the enclosed stag party: crucially, who was looking at whom? (p. 54). Men, previously assured of the privacy of their stag parties, were now also ripe for exposure. By taking voyeurism public and asserting its normalcy, the voyeur loses his privileged point of view, or gaze. Preciado cites Colomina in *Pornotopia*: we think about architecture through ‘the way we think about the relationship between inside and outside, private and public’ [...] ‘with modernity, there is a shift in these relationships, a displacement of the traditional sense of an inside, an enclosed space, established in clear opposition to an outside’ (p. 12). Preciado adds that *Pornotopia* reveals architecture’s ‘theatrical and political character’, along with the cultural conditions that ‘separate the invisible from the visible’ and ‘public regimes’

from 'private regimes' (p. 81). In the USA, the Cold War resulted in the 'unveiling of domesticity' that produced a 'post-domestic interior that is no longer characterised by its privacy and in which the inhabitants are conscious of their double theatrical condition: serving at the same time as actors and spectators' (p. 81). Colomina and Preciado both emphasise the displacement of traditional conceptions of 'inside' and 'outside', and through this societal displacement, conceptions of voyeurism are inevitably disrupted. Voyeur-spectators are also voyeur-actors through the 'unveiling' of domesticity. This disjointed actor/spectator, defined by a 'double theatrical condition', becomes a crucial means of understanding *Playboy's* model, the development of pharmacopornographic power, and Preciado's framing of the relationship between *Playboy* and pharmacopornography (p. 81). Watching and performing come to characterise Preciado's conception of pharmacopornography.

### **The Male Gaze**

This actor/spectator ambiguity is expressed through *Playboy's* 'spatial economy', structured through contemporaneous binary oppositions: 'feminine, masculine, homosexual, heterosexual, inside, outside, public, private, work, leisure, dressed, undressed' (p. 47). In comparison with the ambiguous agency of the actor/spectator, *Playboy* presents the reader with firm binaries. But Preciado notes that the *Playboy* reader can 'switch between opposites', producing both capital and pleasure, and 'pleasure is generated from the constant move from one extreme to another'; he adds that 'the transformation of the private into public functions as a mechanism of sexual arousal. This is the 'play' that gives the magazine its name' (p. 48). Preciado also writes of the homoerotic context of the stag room, the magazine's focus on domestic interiors, and how *Playboy* was 'on the threshold of femininity'. Here, the *Playboy* reader appears both modern and flexible.

However, Preciado writes that 'the only person entitled to play is the male-reader-client. He is the real target of the rhetoric of seduction' (p. 48). Furthermore, the domestic interiors, as Preciado notes, were always offset by heterosexual pornography (p. 34). The centrefold was a security blanket for *Playboy* readers on the 'threshold of femininity' (p. 48). Ultimately, *Playboy's* 'visual fiction' perpetuated the societal primacy of the male gaze, which was distinctly one-way. Preciado writes that 'post-domestic' inhabitants are conscious of their 'double theatrical condition', implying that *Playboy* readers, as the quintessential post-domestic inhabitants, are equally afflicted and aware (p. 81). But

Preciado also describes *Playboy* and its readers through a one-way, male gaze: male agency dominates over the theory of 'play'. Thus, Preciado appears to conflate the Playboy reader with the emergent, doubly theatrical pharmacopornographic subject.

To describe the *Playboy* gaze, Preciado returns to the image of the 'stag room', writing that it epitomised the 'male pleasure of seeing without being seen', which was a 'constant feature of *Playboy's* photographic reportage' (p. 42). Readers were voyeurs, looking through 'peepholes, a crack, or windows into what had previously been a private space'; 'a collective male eye gained access to a carefully choreographed female privacy' (p. 42). Preciado notes that *Playboy* photographs depict women performing daily chores and routines, oblivious of the camera, and the male gaze. Women are: 'stepping out of the shower on little rubber ducks; putting on makeup in front of a mirror with a dress half zipped; decorating the Christmas tree, unaware that their skirts had gotten caught on the ladder, leaving their thigh exposed' (p. 42). As Preciado writes: 'their simple actions and childlike self-absorbed expressions were directly proportional to the stupidity of the male gaze, the gullible and naïve means that underpinned *Playboy's* masturbatory visual mechanism' (p. 43). Fundamentally, and to enable the 'masturbatory mechanism and avoid homosexual desire, the gaze was necessarily always one-way' (p. 43). Women were never portrayed in the company of men, rigorously separating the subject and the object of the gaze, as Preciado describes it. The voyeur was always male, and the object of his visual pleasure was always female. In comparison with Preciado's pharmacopornographic actor/spectator with double vision, *Playboy* establishes gendered voyeurism, and cements subject/object conceptions of gender.

Juxtaposed with the pornographic male gaze, Preciado's *Testo Junkie* details increased female self-surveillance. *Pornotopia* presents pharmacopornography through a gender binary: men constructed their own post-war subjectivities through pornographic voyeurism and consumerist aspiration, and women were subject to pharmacological interventions and increased self-surveillance. While men were encouraged to colonise domestic spaces that were traditionally a woman's domain, as Bachelard intimated with his maternal descriptions of the family home, women's bodies were colonised by pharmacology and self-colonised by self-surveillance. Or as Ross Douthat writes, this was: 'the men's sexual revolution, in which freedom meant freedom to take your pleasure, while women took the Pill' (2016). For Preciado, the 1956 trials of the contraceptive pill are representative of increased self-surveillance for women: a slum in Puerto Rico was razed, cheap imitations of white suburban American homes were constructed, and Puerto Rico quickly became a

‘post and neo-colonial site for pharmacological development’, according to Preciado, and the largest pharmaceutical laboratory in the USA (p. 182). The pills used in the trials were swallowed every six to eight hours, women took their own basal temperature readings and vaginal smears every day, and marked data on a chart. They also took urine samples regularly for hormone analysis. Preciado quotes Laura Marks: ‘Often the only way to collect urine over such a period would have confined women to their homes where they were near a toilet’ (p. 188). Thus, while modern *Playboy* men chose to inhabit the domestic space, modern women were confined to their homes in Puerto Rico, practising self-surveillance. More specifically, women of colour enabled (primarily) white American women to take the Pill, in turn enabling men to ‘take their pleasure’ (2016).

Ultimately, the ‘stag’ aesthetic permeated the magazine, despite its *Playboy* bunny transfiguration: throughout *Pornotopia*, Preciado returns, to the stag room and the stag party, to explain *Playboy* photographs, the male gaze and pharmacopornography. Preciado also uses the stag party to explain *Playboy*’s production of pleasure and masculinity: ‘not only did heterosexual men not need women to enjoy themselves, but they also actually had more fun without them’ (p. 41). This was ‘a pleasure even more intense than sexual pleasure, based on the exclusion of women and the homoerotic consumption of female images’ (p. 41). Preciado adds that this pleasure defined the ‘visual economy of pornography: the gender pleasure arising from the *production of masculinity*’ (my italics) (p. 41). In *Pornotopia*, Preciado’s focus is *Playboy*’s contribution to the development of pharmacopornographic economies. But here, Preciado notes that *Playboy* produces masculinity. Through his analysis of *Playboy*, Preciado increasingly conflates the production of masculinity with the production of pharmacopornography, which becomes problematic in his following book, *Testo Junkie*, in terms of designing pharmacopornographic resistance. Through the conflation of masculinity with pharmacopornography, Preciado shoehorns the limited, decidedly un-radical *Playboy* reader into the emergent, creative pharmacopornographic subject invented through the construction of *Pornotopia*.

*Playboy* is concerned with the production of pleasure and masculinity, which Preciado rightly subsumes into pharmacopornography. But Preciado also conflates the *Playboy* reader, of little subversive potential or personal agency, with the pharmacopornographic subject, which Preciado imbues with significant power and potential. The actor-spectator-voyeur of the post-domestic interior, a figure capable of multiple subject positions, gazes and performances is ultimately at odds with the one-directional *Playboy* reader described by Preciado. For example, Preciado writes that the new

playboy dedicated his life to ‘the simple [...] pleasures of sex and consumption’ (p. 35). *Playboy* described a playful masculinity defined through the affirmation of heterosexuality, if paradoxically in relation to stag parties. In comparison, Preciado writes in his thesis on *Playboy*, and variously in *Testo Junkie*, that the gender techniques of pharmacopornography are ‘flexible, internal and assimilable’: microprosthetics are characteristic of pharmacopornography, rather than the prosthetics of the bachelor pad described below – cameras, binoculars and leather cases (2012, p. 419). Similarly, Preciado writes of the one-way masculine gaze espoused by *Playboy*. But Preciado also writes of post domestic interiors producing people who are ‘conscious of their double theatrical condition, serving at the same time as actors, and spectators’ (p. 81). The pharmacopornographic double agent differs from the ‘simple’ bachelor, dedicated to sex and pleasure rather than conscious of his own subjectification.

However, Preciado’s description of Playmates is helpful here: he writes that the playmate was the ‘result of all these representational techniques’, a ‘double process of visual publication of intimacy and economic privatization and labeling of life’ (p. 59). Here, the ‘doubling’ characteristic of pharmacopornography is defined through the position of women in *Playboy*, rather than men. *Playboy*’s male readers nostalgically cling onto stag parties and binoculars; in comparison, *Playboy*’s women are the doubled actor/spectators of pharmacopornography – taking the pill and allowing the public representation and economic privatisation of their bodies. Preciado writes that the playboy’s ‘sexual success and spatial conquest’ depended on the exclusion of women – the mother, wife and housewife, who had previously defined internal space (p. 52). In comparison, the next-door-girl became the ‘raw material’ for the ideal playmate (p. 52). Consequently, young women became the ‘raw material’ of pharmacopornography. Ultimately, both the voyeur and pharmacopornography are defined both through and against femininity.

## **The Bachelor Pad and the Playboy Mansion**

### The Bachelor Pad

However, *Pornotopia* does describe a transitional space for the *Playboy* reader-cum-pharmacopornographic subject: the bachelor pad. Preciado writes that Hugh Hefner realised that, in order to ‘sculpt a new masculine subjectivity, one had to design a habitat’ (p. 19). This habitat enabled the invention of ‘a series of practices and uses of the domestic that

could function as technohabits of the male body' (p. 19). For Hefner, this space was a *Playboy* utopia, and an alternative to the American family home in the suburbs; for Preciado, the bachelor pad was simply an intermediate space, which introduced the modern man to pharmacopornography and its technological prostheses.

But for both Hefner and Preciado, the bachelor pad was a 'safe and hidden observatory' (p. 35). Preciado writes that men 'retreated from the dangers of the atomic postwar exterior environment', but affirms that the 'bachelor pad' was an observatory and an 'information management center' rather than 'just a refuge from the outside world, designed for sexual pleasure' (p. 35). Thus, the bachelor pad is configured as a voyeur's space: it is 'full of the good things that come in leather cases: binoculars, stereo and reflex cameras, portable radios and guns' (p. 34). The bachelor's kit is the voyeur's kit, characterized by watching and documenting the gaze, with binoculars, cameras and radios.

Preciado also describes these items as prostheses: the bachelor pad was 'supplementing his vulnerable body with certain goods and communication techniques that function as skin-covered prostheses in leather cases and kept him constantly plugged in to the vital flow of information' (p. 35). Through this description, the voyeur and the bachelor pad become continuous: the voyeur becomes inseparable from his camera and pair of binoculars. Stiegler writes that we are formed through tool use; equally, Preciado uses the voyeur's tool-kit to construct pharmacopornography, in the context, and habitat, of the bachelor pad – and also to construct the pharmacopornographic subject. In an interview in *The Paris Review*, Preciado notes that design centres the pharmacopornographic because 'design invents techniques of the body' (2013). When Preciado writes that the voyeur's body is supplemented with prostheses like cameras, he emphasizes how subjectivity production is dominated by the design of new technologies relating to the body and its representation – for example, cameras and photography. But the apex of pharmacopornography is fully incorporable technology, for example, dissolvable testosterone in *Testo Junkie*: 'This is the age of soft, feather-weight, viscous, gelatinous technologies that can be injected, inhaled — "incorporated."' (2013, p. 77).

For Preciado, the relationship between the voyeur and his camera, which heralds the age of incorporable technologies, represents the significance of the bachelor pad. The *Playboy* reader only becomes a voyeur through the aid of his binoculars and camera: the tools of his trade construct his *Playboy* subjectivity. The act of watching, facilitated through technological prostheses, and the continuity of the voyeur's body with his binoculars, completes the bachelor pad, which, through Preciado's descriptions, more closely resembles

a laboratory than an observatory. The bachelor pad represents architectural subjectification: bodies and people are moulded, and although the space is framed as an observatory, the pharmacopornographic gaze is directed inwards – at the construction of the *Playboy* voyeur. However, for Hefner, the bachelor pad/observatory's binoculars facilitate other visual transformations: the transformation of the girl-next-door into a Playmate. For Preciado, the bachelor pad is a plastic, pharmacopornographic space of architectural embodiment, but Hefner's visual transformation is characteristic of classic voyeurism, rather than pharmacopornography.

Preciado writes that Hefner's idea was to 'transform the next-door neighbor girl into a sex symbol'; Preciado adds that 'if the *Playboy* is the central figure of the ongoing theatrical production of a male post-domestic interior, the playmate is an anonymous agent of resexualization of everyday life' (p. 53). Hefner described the 'Playmate of the Month' as a 'political proclamation' and part of the 'girl-next-door effect' (p. 53). The 'effect' is visual, constructed through the voyeurism of the technologically-supplemented bachelor in his observatory/laboratory; produced by eyes that (figuratively) extend into binoculars, in Preciado's pharmacopornographic conception. This 'resexualization of everyday life' signifies *Playboy*'s belief in the productive power of the male gaze (p. 53). But Hefner's 'resexualisation' also represents the power of voyeurism, and the resultant power of the *Playboy* actor/voyeur. Pharmacopornographic subjectification emphasizes the doubling of power: *Playboy* actor/voyeurs are both producers and consumers.

The design of *Playboy*'s magazine also emphasizes the agency, and control, of the male actor/voyeur. Preciado writes that 'it is really the male play of turning the pages that operates the transformation of the next-door neighbor into a real Playmate, that converts dressed into undressed, folded into open, hidden into exposed, private into public, and finally the peeping into 'instant sex'' (pp. 57-58). The ability to fold and unfold the pages, transforming the woman into a Playmate, and from a Playmate into a girl-next-door, ensured the powerful 'play' effect described above – the sense of power expressed through the movement between strict binaries, from dressed to undressed, hidden to exposed. The centerfold, as Preciado describes it, was a 'viewing technique': readers could 'see through walls [...] undressing both domesticity and the female body' (p. 58). Preciado adds that the 'eye and the hand (both reading and masturbating organs)' both produced immaterial products: the image of the Playmate, and pleasure. The voyeur's agency is asserted again: the voyeur is a producer of affects and immaterial products, and the (often passively conceptualized) visual act of reading becomes an act of production. Here, according to

Preciado, *Playboy* effects the transformation of voyeur into actor/voyeur and emergent pharmacopornographic subject. The classic voyeur equipped with prostheses – *Playboy*, binoculars – becomes a producer, as well as consumer, of affects, and a pharmacopornographic subject. The construction of the pharmacopornographic subject is architectural, but also prosthetic – and developed through the classic voyeur in *Pornotopia*.

### The Playboy Mansion

I described the bachelor pad above as a transitional space, for the *Playboy* reader-cum-pharmacopornographic subject. But *Pornotopia* also depicts the transformation of the observatory-bachelor pad into the Playboy Mansion, a space of increased surveillance. Preciado writes that the Playboy Mansion is defined by ‘broadcasting interiority’ through surveillance technologies in domestic spaces like bedrooms (p. 126). Equally, in *Privacy and Publicity*, Beatriz Colomina writes that ‘seeing, for Le Corbusier, is the primordial activity of the house. The house is a device to see the world, a mechanism of viewing’ (1994, p. 7). In comparison, the Playboy Mansion primarily exists to be seen, despite facilitating voyeurism. Hefner exports voyeurism, presenting ‘watching’ itself as a visual spectacle, along with the performance of pleasure. Thus, the Mansion is an intensification of the bachelor pad described above: the classic voyeur becomes an actor – to be seen, as well as seeing. The bachelor pad’s function was to access interiority, through prosthetics like binoculars; in comparison, the Mansion broadcasts interiority.

The Playboy Mansion can also be described as a transitional space, according to Preciado: it expresses a tension between ‘reform and revolution, between control and subversion’ (p. 131). It ‘behaved as a counterspace’ that challenged the ‘heterosexual dwelling at the heart of consumption and reproduction’ in American postwar culture. But the Mansion also acted as a ‘spatialisation of the body-control regimes of the emerging pharmacopornographic capitalism’ (p. 131). Preciado adds that this ‘productive tension’ was responsible for its success as a ‘pornotopia’ (p. 131). Thus, the success of the Playboy Mansion-as-pornotopia relied on the ‘tension’ between its antagonistic relationship with the disciplinary regime (heterosexual consumption and reproduction) and its affinity with new technologies of body control associated with pharmacopornography.

This ‘productive tension’ can be expressed through the voyeur’s double gaze. As quoted above, Preciado writes that the postwar ‘post-domestic’ interior was devoid of privacy and characterized by the inhabitants’ conscious ‘double theatrical condition’: they

served ‘at the same time as actors and spectators’ (p. 81). The Playboy Mansion also constructs the actor/spectator ‘theatrical condition’: the space is designed for both performing and watching. Hefner was inspired by his friend Harold Chaskin’s house in Miami, which featured a two-way mirror in the solarium, so guests or occupants of the house could watch ‘sunbathing bodies outside without being seen’ (p. 100). Chaskin also built a glass-walled indoor pool in the living room, so guests could similarly watch ‘bodies swimming half-naked without getting wet’ (p. 100). Hefner built a replica of Chaskin’s glass-walled pool in the Playboy Mansion, following the visual model of *Playboy* readers – looking without being seen. Chaskin’s design-imperative to avoid being seen or getting wet, while accessing bodies, expresses the gendered production of pleasure in pharmacopornography.

In contrast with spaces designed for performance and pleasure, Preciado writes that the fourth floor of the Playboy Mansion was characterised by disciplinary architecture. The Playmates-in-training lived on the fourth floor, which was lined with bunk beds, post-boxes, telephone cubicles and thin carpets, in contrast with the plush interiors below. These spaces can be described as ‘disciplinary’, through their function as training camps: teaching women to produce pleasure. But they also function as the ‘spatialisation of the body-control regimes of the emerging pharmacopornographic capitalism’: these spaces represent the necessity of the ‘productive tension’ described above, between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic (p. 131). Disciplinary training is required, in disciplinary spaces, to produce pharmacopornographic pleasure – as well as pharmacopornographic subjects, and bodies. Preciado’s conception of ‘pharmacopornographic’ encompasses both the effective production, as well as performance of pleasure. And here, the ‘production’ of pleasure is disciplinary, in comparison with its performance.

Thus, the Mansion produces both actors and spectators. But the space itself was under constant surveillance, performing for *Playboy* readers in magazine photospreads, and later, for online viewers. Each room of the Mansion was filmed by closed circuit cameras that ‘scanned every nook and cranny and recorded twenty-four hours a day’ (p. 114). A control room, located next to Hefner’s bedroom, stored and regularly broadcast the images. Hefner’s original design commissioned for the *Playboy* townhouse was entirely glass-walled, allowing passers-by to peer into its pool and multiple bedrooms. But Hefner eventually bought a mock-Tudor house in Hollywood and left its exterior unaltered. Instead, cameras were installed throughout the building. The contrast between glass and cameras clarifies the distinction between transparency and the production, or performance, of

interiority. The Playboy Mansion exists to produce and broadcast a carefully curated performance of interiority.

The exclusion of glass in favour of cameras and screens extends to the Playboy Mansion's 'multimedia bunker bedroom', which is 'without windows but full of screens' and 'corresponds to the one-sided vision of the peep show rooms' (p. 177). In comparison with the two-way vision of a window, the screens behave like a 'one-way glass in a peep show': 'either you see or you are being seen, but you can never be on both sides at the same time (p. 177)'. This asymmetrical relationship produces both power and pleasure: Preciado notes that the body and eye are alternately masked and displayed. *Pornotopia* adds that from 1950 onwards, bedrooms are not complete without screens and technological devices, eliding pleasure and surveillance, 'control and enjoyment', and 'voyeurism and exhibitionism' (p. 177).

Preciado compares the Playboy Mansion to a contemporary pornotopia: Big Sister. Big Sister, a brothel in Prague, allows clients to receive free sexual services if they consent to being filmed. Preciado writes that the visitor '(who enjoys being filmed), is in reality engaging with the surfer of the web (who enjoys watching). The two are connected virtually, and what happens to them both is at once totally intimate and entirely public' (p. 223). Thus, voyeurism unites the pornotopia: watching and being watched cement the production of power and pleasure. The movement from traditional, unidirectional voyeurism to pharmacopornographic subjectivity involves the acceptance of being watched, as well as watching.

But Big Sister distinguishes between two separate characters: the watcher and the watched. In comparison, the Playboy Mansion's screens remind the actor/voyeur of the imperative to play both roles: the actor *and* the spectator. The conclusion of *Pornotopia* which compares Big Sister to the Playboy Mansion omits the 'double theatrical condition', the 'play' between binaries or states that produces pleasure (p. 81). Preciado writes that the visitor who enjoys being filmed is connected virtually with the surfer of the web who enjoys watching, but the Playboy Mansion produces a voyeur who alternates between watching and being watched. Moving between intimacy and public performance creates tension, pleasure and power. Thus, the Mansion effects a mutation of the *Playboy* voyeur. In the bachelor pad, the voyeur is encouraged to watch, enabled to watch through technological prostheses, and operates a process of immaterial production. In the Playboy Mansion, the voyeur is both a producer and a product. 'Broadcasting interiority' means compulsive display: the voyeur no longer 'takes' interiority through the act of watching, rather interiority is given away. In the

Playboy Mansion, the voyeur/actor possesses less power and agency – as he becomes subject to the ‘body-control regimes’ of pharmacopornographic capitalism. In the Mansion, these body-control regimes involve exposure, performance and production of pleasure. But pharmacopornography is also characterised by consumption, which the section below will explore.

### **Conspicuous Consumption**

Thus, in the context of the voyeur/actor, trapped between watching and being watched, it becomes necessary to examine the ‘play’ – the switch that triggers the movement between inside and outside, public and private, watched and watching. Preciado notes that after the 1950s, bedrooms are incomplete without technological devices and screens, which complicates the relationship between pleasure and surveillance, and voyeurism and exhibitionism. *Playboy* is characterized by the production of interiority and domesticity, the male gaze, and spatial organisation to maximize pleasure. But *Playboy* also ‘directly addressed the sexual desire of its readers’ through advertisements and incitements to consumption: the company ‘exposed the carnal aspect of their consumption practices, requiring the involvement of their bodies and their affects [...] it made sexual desire extend indiscriminately from jazz to the Formica panels used in the office desks advertised in its pages’ (p. 27). *Playboy* encouraged conspicuous consumption, items purchased in order to be displayed and looked at, but also, like the bachelor’s binoculars or the glass-walled pool, to facilitate watching. Thus, perhaps conspicuous consumption can be interpreted as the ‘switch’.

Anne McClintock writes that voyeurism ‘dramatises the violation of a threshold: the keyhole, the window, the camera aperture. Voyeurism acknowledges a barrier to pleasure, a limit to power, and then transgresses the limit, reclaiming power in a forbidden excess of pleasure. Indeed, the fact that an act is forbidden makes it pleasurable’ (1995, p. 129). McClintock adds that ‘voyeurism expresses a refusal to accept a boundary to the self and its pleasures’ (p. 129). *Playboy* defines consumption as the matrix for pleasure and sexuality, in which voyeurism establishes and transgresses boundaries. *Playboy* presents the actor/voyeur with technological prostheses and furniture which facilitate sexual adventures, simultaneously presenting the actor/voyeur with a barrier to sex. The voyeur, through intuiting a seamless link between interior design, bachelor furniture and pornography, or

sex, discovers a ‘boundary to the self’, to be overcome through consumption. Conspicuous consumption represents overcoming a barrier to potential pleasure.

The association of interior design with pornography could also be interpreted as contemporaneously transgressive. McClintock writes that ‘the fact that an act is forbidden makes it pleasurable’ (p. 129). Interior design was firmly a woman’s domain in the 50s and 60s, and *Playboy* bachelors were colonising ‘female’ territory, reclaiming space and design to furnish their new habitat. Preciado writes that ‘the association between domestic interiors and naked girls ensured that *Playboy* was not simply a women’s or a queer magazine’ (p. 34). But this association also problematises the male gaze – or creates transgressive potential. A man reading *Playboy*: where is his lustful gaze directed – at the centrefold or a double-page spread of Borsani sofas? Equally, a man walking past a house, ogling a kitchen: is he watching an attractive housewife prepare dinner, or coveting her Formica panels? His sexuality and gender are at play through the seamless presentation of consumption and pornography. As Preciado notes, ‘this seclusion among designer objects [...] was a paradoxical process’ in which the bachelor gambled his ‘autonomy and masculinity’ (p. 34). The *Playboy* had escaped the suburban home and his suburban housewife, but: ‘the just-divorced man could only become a *Playboy* through an exercise involving the re-appropriation of domestic space and interior design, practices traditionally linked to femininity’ (p. 34). Here, conspicuous consumption allows for transgressive play between femininity and masculinity.

Reversibility and ‘play’ characterized the interior design peddled by *Playboy*: advertised furniture implied the imminent transformation of the suburban husband into a *Playboy* bachelor. Exemplifying this commitment, *Playboy* advertised ‘flip-flop’ furniture: the ‘flip-flop’ sofa was the ultimate bachelor prosthesis, praised by *Playboy* for its ability to ‘mechanize seduction’ (p. 87). Preciado writes that the *Playboy* was situated between opposites: work/leisure, dressed/undressed, but that his final decision was ‘just to play’, emphasising the perceived flexibility of sexual, political, social and gender norms (p. 47). Preciado also writes that through Borsani’s Divan D70, the designer popularised a ‘rhetoric of camouflage, mutation, mobility and flexibility’ that became a crucial expression of *Playboy* values (p. 87). The divan could be flipped into a bed, which *Playboy* interpreted as a ‘physical expression of the almost metaphysical leap from vertical to horizontal values’ (p. 90). The bachelor’s female guest could be flipped from vertical to horizontal, from ‘woman to bunny’ and from ‘dressed to nude’ (p. 90). Hugh Hefner’s vibrating, rotating bed, to which Preciado devotes a chapter in *Pornotopia*, also enables the switch between

work and pleasure, vertical and horizontal. His bed is both a seduction prosthesis and his workplace: it features a phone and a variety of buttons which initiate vibrations and other functions. These buttons, and its clunky means of rotation, enabled Hefner to move freely and easily between (public) business work and (private) sexual exploits – work and play became indistinguishable. Hefner encouraged his staff to form sexual relationships and to work horizontally: his business model was defined by the centrality of pleasure, and prostheses to enable the production of pleasure.

Preciado notes that *Playboy* depicted the bachelor apartment as a ‘theatre of masculinity’: the liminal, reversible *Playboy* required equally reversible, theatrical and flexible furniture (p. 85). Thus, *Playboy* enables its readers to transform, through performance and elaborate staging, into a bachelor. Freud identified both a fear of castration and castration disavowal inherent in voyeurism, but the voyeur-*Playboy*, through reading the magazine, enacts a denial of disavowal. And to confirm his masculinity through this denial, voyeurism becomes exhibitionism: Freud wrote that ‘perversions’ like masochism and sadism, voyeurism and exhibitionism were connected, as active and passive forms of the same drives (1905). In this context, the ‘theatre of masculinity’ displayed in the bachelor apartment is a desperate exhibition: an ostentatious and theatrical sexual presentation, performed with the aid of technological and architectural prosthetics. Of course, ironically, exhibitionism has been historically connected to masochism, rather than mastery: Theodor Reik, one of Freud’s first students, has written that there is a ‘constant connection between masochism and exhibitionism’ (2017, p. 235).

Arguably, however, Preciado overstates *Playboy*’s potential to enact the transition from voyeur to consumerist, exhibitionist bachelor, and, in turn, pharmacopornographic subject. *Pornotopia* presents *Playboy*’s project as a realised success: the voyeur in the bushes becomes the pipe-smoking bachelor with a rotating bed. Preciado exults in *Playboy*’s influence and success in the context of pharmacopornographic capitalism – because it affirms that architectonic embodiment, pornography and pharmacology are capable of constructing bodies and societies. But he conflates this pharmacopornographic success with the perceived triumph of *Playboy* in relation to its readers. Rather than spawning a generation of successful bachelors, *Playboy* inevitably promised more than it could deliver. Ross Douhat writes that ‘among men who were promised pliant centrefolds and ended up single with only high-speed internet to comfort them, the men’s sexual revolution has curdled into a toxic subculture, resentful of female empowerment in all its forms’ (2016).

Thus, the *Playboy* voyeur is left awkwardly stranded somewhere between binoculars and the eroticised domestic interior – as a gateway to pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

Ultimately, Preciado presents voyeurism and pharmacopornographic subjectivity as continuous, with desperate exhibitionism/conspicuous consumption effecting the ‘play’ between them. But traditional conceptions of voyeurism persist in Hefner’s vision of *Playboy*, alongside exhibitionism. The glass walls designed for Hefner’s Playboy Mansion were transparent and enabled shared visibility. In comparison, Hefner installed screens – which only allow for unidirectional voyeurism, rather than pharmacopornographic fluidity. The design of the Mansion was futuristic and pharmacopornographic; in practice, the house inscribed classical conceptions of voyeurism. Accordingly, Preciado underestimates the continuing role of *Playboy* voyeurism in pharmacopornographic subjectivity, despite ascribing the success of the Playboy Mansion to its ‘productive tension’ between counter-disciplinary and pharmacopornographic space.

To summarise: in the *Playboy* narrative, their readers become *Playboy* bachelors, supplemented by technological prostheses which anticipate, or contribute to, pharmacopornography. In Preciado’s *Pornotopia* narrative, voyeurism (symbolised by the *Playboy* reader) is displaced by pharmacopornographic production and consumption and watching and performing. Pharmacopornographic subjectivity is characterised by its ‘doubly theatrical’ nature. In Preciado’s narrative, *Playboy* effects this change: through practices of consumption, exhibitionism and prostheses, the *Playboy* reader becomes the pharmacopornographic subject or the voyeur/actor of the post-domestic space. For Preciado, the voyeur/actor of the post-domestic space becomes synonymous, or fluidly continuous, with the pharmacopornographic subject.

In comparison, I argue that the voyeur/actor described by Preciado remains a combination of the classic voyeur and the emerging pharmacopornographic subject characterised by the ‘productive tension’ described above – embedded in both the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes of power. This combination of traditional voyeurism and pharmacopornography is discernible in the voyeur/actor’s affinity with the visible/invisible binary. Preciado writes that pharmacopornographic models of body control are microprosthetic and bodily, in comparison with the tangible ‘orthopaedics and architecture’ characteristic of disciplinary regimes (p. 76). *Playboy*’s brand has historically traded on the transgressive potential of making hidden spaces and bodies visible. Preciado writes that *Playboy* used pornographic techniques designed by cabaret theatre and ‘did a striptease of the spaces that until then had remained hidden’ (p. 76). The voyeur/actor is

suspended between the economy of the visible: which involves exposure, performance and the production of pleasure, and the pharmacopornographic economy of the invisible: unseen, behind a screen, watching bodies, consuming pleasure and producing affect.

## **Junkspace**

Thus, through *Pornotopia*, Preciado presents us with distinct spaces and subjects which characterize disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes: correspondingly, the Playboy reader in the bachelor pad and the actor/voyeur of the Playboy Mansion. But Preciado's theorization of the shift from disciplinary to pharmacopornographic power requires a transitional space and a transitional subject – an awkward space, and an awkward subject. The architect Rem Koolhaas has identified an environment that produces and reinforces the stranded, voyeur-cum-pharmacopornographic subject: 'Junkspace', a jumbled architecture that 'fuses high and low, public and private, bloated and starved, to offer a seamless patchwork of the permanently disjointed' (2001). Preciado's doubled-up actors and spectators have created, and now inhabit, a world that reflects their confused performances. Koolhaas, like Preciado, has been criticized for 'resistance through compliance': Hal Foster writes that his career has been characterised by 'ambiguous moves', like criticising the 'contemporary apotheosis of shopping', then serving as house architect for Prada, or opposing 'spectacle' architecture and then designing a Guggenheim gallery in Las Vegas (2001).<sup>6</sup> But Foster admits that this 'isn't a simple story of co-option': in an interview, Koolhaas notes that his 'entire life story' has been comprised of 'running against the current and running with the current. Sometimes running with the current is underestimated. The acceptance of certain realities doesn't preclude idealism. It can lead to certain breakthroughs' (2012).

'Running against current and running with the current' is comparable with Muñoz's 'on and against' – describing both immersion and resistance (1999, p. 11). Awkwardly poised between resistance and compliance, Koolhaas and Preciado are aptly placed to analyse contemporary 'Junkspace' and its precursors in *Playboy* architecture. Preciado and Koolhaas both write that we are shaped by our habitats: supermarkets, skyscrapers, vast shopping centres and bachelor 'pads' are spaces that not only modify but manufacture

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<sup>6</sup> Preciado referenced repeated criticism of his work in a recent talk, paraphrasing his critics: 'You're so critical, but you're taking testosterone' (2018).

subjectivity. For both Preciado and Koolhaas, subjectivity is constructed through architectonic embodiment, rather than accessible through narrative or psychology.

Crucially, Junkspace appears to reveal and intensify separation, isolation and voyeurism. Koolhaas has written that Junkspace uses an overabundance of glass: ‘acres of glass hang from spidery cables [...] transparency only reveals everything in which you cannot partake’ (2001). As noted above, Preciado writes that pornography is capable of constructing ‘visual fictions’ that allow readers to ‘see what was happening behind a stranger’s windows, to view through opaque walls, to peek into hidden interiors’ (p. 59). But *Playboy* also encourages its readers to recreate these visual fictions: Hugh Hefner’s indoor swimming pool with glass walls can enable the transformation of the consumer: from voyeur to exhibitionist bachelor. Hefner advocates participation in the erotic fictions displayed and described in *Playboy*: erotic fictions are publicly performed rather than hidden behind picket fences and brick walls. Thus, *Playboy*’s architectural pornography acts a precursor to Junkspace and its fondness for ‘acres of glass’: glass incites and enables perpetual public performance. But, as *Playboy*’s readers discovered, women often failed to materialize in tandem with glass walls, swimming pools and convertible beds. Then, as Junkspace affirms, glass reverts to revealing ‘everything in which you cannot partake’ (2001). Junkspace is the architectural manifestation of the toxic, voyeuristic subculture described by Douthat – ‘acres of glass’ symbolize loneliness and unfulfilled promises, rather than aspiration.

Junkspace also articulates the persistence of material consumption/production alongside immaterial consumption/production, thus the ‘permanently disjointed’ nature of the actor/voyeur (2001). Koolhaas writes that Junkspace is ‘the sum total of our current achievements; we have built more than did all previous generations put together, but somehow we do not register on the same scales. We do not leave pyramids’ (2001). In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado writes about taking testosterone for the first time, and notes ‘the feeling of strength, like a pyramid revealed by a sandstorm’: for Preciado, the pharmacopornographic subject is capable of building immaterial, bodily, dissolvable pyramids (2013, p. 21). Koolhaas writes that this awkward space fails to ‘register on the same scales’ as pyramids, but Junkspace creates a new metric, through encouraging infinite immaterial and material construction, and blurring the line between fluid and solid (2001). This conjunction of the immaterial and the material in Junkspace is also expressed through Koolhaas’s description of entertainment: he writes that the ‘dictatorial is no longer politics but entertainment. Through Junkspace, entertainment organises hermetic regimes of ultimate exclusion and

concentration' (2001). Koolhaas cites gambling, golf, holidays and conventions. Here, the dictatorial is organised through the production of immaterial pleasure – itself organised through material space. Thus, Junkspace corresponds with spatial body-control techniques characteristic of pharmacopornographic power

Crucially, 'we do not leave pyramids' expresses disorientation. Koolhaas writes that: 'continuity is the essence of Junkspace; it exploits any invention that enables expansion, deploys the infrastructure of seamlessness: escalator, air-conditioning [...] It is always interior, so extensive that you rarely perceive limits; it promotes disorientation by any means (mirror, polish, echo)' (2001). Here, the continuity of immaterial and material production promotes disorientation. For example, to gesture beyond *Pornotopia*, Preciado's testosterone gel is both solid and fluid – Testogel immaterially produces his new gender and sexuality, it is materially evident, but slides through his skin and into his blood seamlessly, without a trace. Testogel is the epitome of Junkspace: it eschews limits, orients and disorients the body, and works through a logic of endless expansion, spreading through networks of skin and blood. Koolhaas writes that Junkspace is 'held together' by 'skin, like a bubble' (2001). Thus, Testogel is a product of Junkspace, acting on and through the skin, deploying the 'infrastructure of seamlessness', binding material and immaterial production (2001).

Koolhaas also writes that Junkspace is the 'body double of space', and a 'territory of impaired vision, limited expectation' (2001). Here, Koolhaas emphasises the unreality of Junkspace, and its false promise: 'body double' connotes emptiness. In comparison with the Playboy bachelor pad, and the Playboy Mansion, both spaces of enhanced vision and utopic vision, Junkspace, the transitional space between voyeur and pharmacopornographic subject, is characterised by 'impaired vision'. The bachelor pad and the Mansion are also defined through 'play', the pleasure produced by the movement between binaries: for example, between dressed and undressed, work and leisure, or watching and watched. In comparison, Koolhaas writes that 'polarities have merged' in Junkspace: there is 'nothing left between desolation and frenzy' (2001). The subtraction of vision and 'play' from Junkspace emphasises their centrality in the spaces designed by *Playboy*. 'Body double', 'impaired vision', 'limited expectation' and 'nothing left' collectively construct an empty space, and imply limited agency for its awkward inhabitants. 'Impaired vision' also implies that Junkspace is constructed through architectonic embodiment: a 'territory of impaired vision' connotes a continuity between bodies and architecture.

But, arguably, the ‘productive tension’ of the Playboy Mansion persists in some descriptions of Junkspace. Koolhaas writes that Junkspace is ‘not exactly ‘anything goes’; in fact, the secret of Junkspace is that it is both promiscuous and repressive’ (2001). In *Pornotopia*, the Playboy Mansion is defined through a similar juxtaposition: the lower floors of the Mansion are devoted to pleasure-seeking and promiscuity; the upper floors host stark dormitories for the *Playboy* bunnies, with bunkbeds and cubicles – training camps for enhanced pleasure production. Furthermore, the emphasis on perpetual surveillance in the Mansion dovetails with encouraged promiscuity, creating the promiscuous/repressive environment of Junkspace.

However, Herbert Marcuse’s theory of repressive desublimation is helpful here: Marcuse writes that the ‘Pleasure Principle absorbs the Reality Principle; sexuality is liberated (or rather liberalised) in socially constructive forms’ (2013, p. 75). In Marcuse’s conception, ‘socially constructive’ means affirmational or non-resistant: the possibility of resistance is substituted for the perception of sexual freedom. Rather than repression co-existing alongside promiscuity, promiscuity becomes a form of control-by-displacement. Thus, perhaps the Playboy Mansion epitomises repressive desublimation, rather than the ‘productive tension’ described by Preciado. In comparison, Junkspace is disoriented: ‘promiscuous’ and ‘repressive’ co-exist, awkwardly – characteristic of its position between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic spaces.

Junkspace also exposes class segregation, comparable to Playboy’s gender segregation. György Lukács has written that the proletariat’s main resource against the hegemony of ‘knowledge, culture and routine’ is ‘its ability to see the social totality’: it ‘serves and observes commodities (including itself as a commodity)’, comparable to Preciado’s description of post-domestic inhabitants ‘serving as actors and spectators’ (1971, p. 197). In this context, the ‘ability to see the social totality’ might refer to the ability to see its ‘seamless patchwork of the permanently disjointed’ (2001). A Manhattan condo building developed by Extell exemplifies Junkspace: the design incorporates a grand Hudson River entrance for its luxury apartments, and a separate entrance at the back for the subsidized apartments for low-income residents, known as a ‘poor door’. In response to class divisions perpetuated by these architectural designs, a state law was passed in New York that forbids companies, which are often benefiting from tax incentives for incorporating affordable housing into their plans, from proposing separate entrances.

‘Poor doors’ are a helpfully visible symptom of Junkspace and indicative of the ‘social totality’: ‘poor doors’ are an example of Junkspace making visible contemporary

power dynamics. If Junkspace is a ‘seamless patchwork of the permanently disjointed’, visible seams like ‘poor doors’ are both literal and metaphorical points of entry. Condo buildings like these both inhabit and make visible Junkspace. Junkspace articulates a structure of simultaneous separation and contact, and a sense of precarity. The ‘poor door’ tenants ‘awkwardly’ (implying closeness) execute an incomplete performance of a luxury apartment owner. Here, ‘poor doors’ epitomise the organisation of space as a form of oppression, specifically a form of oppression which persists in a supposedly more ambiguous framework – subsidies, access to ‘luxury’. Similarly, Hefner frames the Playboy Mansion as liberating, while subjecting men and women to different spatial organisation, or control, in turn representative of differing strategies of body-control: women are Playboy bunnies, upstairs, in disciplinary dormitories; men are downstairs, in pharmacopornographic utopias. Both Extell and Playboy’s architectural designs are also representative of Marcuse’s repressive desublimation: the spaces are both promiscuous and repressive, but, crucially, are repressive by virtue of their promiscuity. Their perceived ‘promiscuity’ produces their repressive power. Jameson writes about the power of being able to see the ‘social totality’, which is visible here; postmodern city architecture, exemplified by Extell and Playboy, makes this vision possible. Thus, although Junkspace offers ‘impaired vision’, its structure, disoriented and awkward, makes the ‘social totality’ visible – perhaps indicating the potential for agency in this transitional space, despite Koolhaas’s warning of ‘limited expectations’ (2001).

But although the possibilities of agency and social-totally-vision are discernible, Koolhaas’s emphasis on ‘limited expectations’ clarifies that Junkspace is not conducive to transgression. Both the bachelor pad and the Playboy Mansion offer perceived transgression of binaries: public/private, inside/outside, masculine/feminine, and the transgression of sexual norms. In Junkspace, acres of glass symbolize loneliness rather than erotic possibility. Junkspace makes visible transgression-as repressive-desublimation. In comparison, *Playboy* historically relied on the supposed power of transgression. Journalist Ravi Somaiya associates its recent decline with its loss of transgressive power – or the fiction of transgressive power. Somaiya writes that ‘for a generation of American men, reading *Playboy* was a cultural rite, an illicit thrill consumed by flashlight. Now every teenage boy has an Internet-connected phone instead’ (2015). Somaiya adds that pornographic magazines have ‘lost their shock value, their commercial value and their cultural relevance’ (2015). In 1972, one *Playboy* issue sold seven million copies, its bestseller to date, but its current US edition loses three million dollars a year and the magazines are subsidised by

*Playboy* branded products sold in China. Preciado writes that Playboy's pornotopia 'presented itself as a model of transgression of traditional gender and sexual norms and therefore as a possible sexual organisation system for revolutionary architectonic practices' (p. 172). By contrast, he notes that Playboy's expansion designates the logo a 'mass market accessory' rather than a 'secret symbol of vice and transgression' (p. 172).

However, both Preciado and Somaiya emphasise Playboy's transgression of norms. Preciado indicates that the brand's earlier, exclusive organisation was capable of enabling 'revolutionary architectonic practices', in comparison with its current iteration. Somaiya writes that Playboy has been 'overtaken by the changes it pioneered' (2015); and cites the Playboy CEO: 'the battle has been fought and won', 'you're now just one click away from every sex act imaginable for free. And so it's just passé at this juncture' (2015). Preciado gestures towards *Playboy*'s decline at the end of *Pornotopia*, but offers inadequate analysis. Ultimately, my insertion of Junkspace between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic architecture makes clear that Playboy's success and relevance are based on its transgression-myth – which is perhaps synonymous with, or indicative of, repressive desublimation. This myth, or fiction, is used as a form of body-control in the Playboy bachelor pad and the Playboy Mansion. Junkspace also makes visible the importance of the practice of 'play' and multiple vision to *Playboy*, and to both disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power.

### **The Awkward Voyeur**

Junkspace is transitional and awkward: allowing for development between the classic voyeur of early *Playboy* and the voyeur-actor of the Mansion, which Preciado describes as an early pharmacopornographic subject. But, as described above, Preciado writes of the continuity between the early *Playboy* reader and the pharmacopornographic subject. In comparison, I argue that Junkspace is a necessary transitional space between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic. Equally, my formulation of the 'awkward voyeur' here represents a transitional figure between reader and actor. Here, I elaborate Preciado's description of the doubly theatrical actor/spectator, an underdeveloped figure in *Pornotopia*. Preciado underestimates voyeurism-as-mastery in the emergent pharmacopornographic regime, moving too quickly to compensatory exhibitionism, and a distinct pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

Although Preciado writes of the 'double theatrical condition', of the actor/spectator of the 'post-domestic' home, he fails to reconcile this nuanced figure with his interpretation

of voyeurism. Preciado writes that *Playboy* voyeurism is ‘a visual fiction that enabled a reader to eroticise everyday architecture: to see what was happening behind a stranger’s windows, to view through opaque walls, to peek into hidden interiors’ (p. 81). This description presupposes the Freudian definition of voyeurism described above, associated with sadism and mastery. Here, the *Playboy* voyeur is in control, and controlling – constructing visual fictions and asserting the dominance of the male gaze. Discussing sadism and mastery in relation to voyeurism, Freud writes that these drives function as exact counterparts: ‘das genaue Gegenstück’, they are completely corresponding: ‘Die volle Übereinstimmung’ – they are ‘entsprechenden positive Perversionen’, meaning corresponding perversions (1961). But the use of ‘corresponding’ and ‘counterpart’ implies co-existence, and a symbiotic relationship between the drives of sadism/mastery and voyeurism. In comparison, Anne McClintock writes that voyeurism’s logic, thus part of the ‘logic of the pornographic imagination’, is established through a loss of control (p. 129). Pleasure then derives from ‘mastering in fantasy a situation that is fundamentally dangerous and threatening’ (p. 129). McClintock adds that voyeurism involves the ‘deliberate controlled re-enactment of the loss (of power) and its subsequent mastery’ (p. 129). Accordingly, voyeurism can be interpreted as a compensatory mechanism, and a response to threat and fear. As opposed to a corresponding ‘drive to cruelty’, McClintock configures voyeurism as a loss of mastery and an attempt to regain control (p. 129).

Christian Metz writes that voyeurism is sadistic, but Kaja Silverman notes that the ‘primal scene’ reveals an older form of voyeurism synonymous with masochism and passivity: ‘Far from controlling the sounds and images of parental sexuality, the child held captive within the crib is controlled – indeed, overwhelmed – by them [...] the mastering, sadistic variety of voyeurism discussed by Metz can perhaps be understood as a psychic formation calculated to reverse the power relations of the primal scene – as a compensatory drama whereby passivity yields to activity through and instinctual ‘turning around’ and reversal’ (Clover 1992, p. 207). Thus, perhaps *Playboy*’s (or Preciado’s) ‘acting and watching’ voyeur is associated with masochism, rather than sadism, through his prosthetic, sexual exhibitionism, and defined through ‘compensatory drama’, and compensatory mechanisms related to a loss of control. Freud’s description of the voyeur does allow for ‘ambivalence’, and an affinity with both active and passive forms of different drives, but McClintock and Silverman’s voyeur is fundamentally a compensatory character, dependent on the infliction of fear or a loss of control in order to perform a redeeming drama.

Significantly, Silverman writes that voyeurism is often defined by a ‘turning around’, or a ‘reversal’, when ‘passivity yields to activity’ (p. 207). This formulation of the voyeur relates to Preciado’s description of the ‘double theatrical condition’ of the ‘actor and spectator’ in the post-domestic home. Passivity yields to activity, which, in turn, yields to passivity, as situations are mastered and lost, turn by turn. This ‘turning around’ is similar to Preciado’s theory of the ‘play’ in *Playboy*: the movement between binaries (gender, inside/outside, public/private) produces tension and pleasure. This interpretation of voyeurism also displays the circular logic as performativity, which enacts the repetition of normativity with the hope of disruption, or mastery. McClintock writes that fetishism ‘embodies contradiction, repetition’ and ‘multiple agency’ (p. 129). Equally, fetishes like voyeurism enact a performance of domination and submission, alternating between displacing and wielding power through the voyeur’s gaze. Butler writes that gender is an ‘act that is ‘open to splittings, self-parody, self-criticism, and those hyperbolic exhibitions of ‘the natural’ that, in their very exaggeration reveal its fundamentally phantasmic status’ (2004, p. 51). Similarly, the awkward voyeur’s performance extends the ‘natural’ fascination inherent in watching into a hyperbolic exhibition, or a parody of ‘watching’. But this iterative process is compensatory: here, voyeurism is yielding to, rather than wielding, power. In comparison, performativity, in Butler’s formulation, is potentially progressive, its iterative process aiming to encompass power, despite its normative repetitions.

Thus, my formulation of the ‘awkward voyeur’, developed to improve on the insufficiency of Preciado’s account, is characterised by a ‘turning around’ or ‘play’, which is fundamentally awkward – defined by ‘splittings’, ‘self-parody’ and hyperbole (p. 51). ‘Awkward’ derives from the Old Norse ‘afugr’, meaning turned the wrong way, which became ‘awk’ in late Middle English, meaning backwards, or perversity. Adam Kotsko writes that awkwardness itself is awkwardly formulated and understood: he writes that we ‘lack a clear word for something that is somehow between the objective and the subjective, between the status of an external situation and an emotion’ (2010, p. 9). The form of voyeurism I identified above has an affinity with ‘awkwardness’: the voyeur awkwardly ‘plays’ between masochism and sadism, erotic fulfilment and the compensatory gaze, his gaze always directed the ‘wrong’ way. Kotsko writes that ‘everyday awkwardness’ involves the violation of a social norm, and the voyeur’s gaze, furtively directed inwards, epitomises this violation (p. 26).

‘Awkward’ here also implies the blurring of distinctions between public and private sexuality – as noted above in the context of the privatisation, or public exploitation, of

‘intimacy’. The voyeur’s gaze configures a private act as public through visually and mentally inserting himself into the scene. He also embellishes the public/private performance through sexual fantasy, circumscribing its visibility and privacy. Ultimately, the voyeur remains hidden, and this refusal to reveal his position obscures the public/private boundaries: private sexual, or nonsexual, scenes become public through the voyeur’s gaze, but also remain awkwardly private. ‘Awkward’ also describes the power imbalance: the voyeur possesses visual power through observing a private scene, but the voyeur is also, presumably, observing a scene of desired, but unattainable pleasure. Thus, frustration and a feeling of power or control awkwardly share the same territory.

But the descriptions above describe ordinary awkwardness: in *Pornotopia*, potent awkwardness emerges through the move between the penthouse and the mansion: the voyeur becomes awkward when he moves from his position as observer in an observatory to pawn in a porn den. In the bachelor pad, the voyeur controls the gaze; in the *Playboy* mansion, the voyeur becomes awkward, like a Picasso painting performing its awkwardness through layered faces with dislocated eyes pointing in different directions. The awkward voyeur is simultaneously watching, watching being watched, and performing. Preciado writes of the doubled role of ‘actor’ and ‘spectator’, but ignores the omnipresent, technological third eye, which enables the watched to watch themselves and the watching to be watched. The one-directional producer becomes a product-cum-producer, the movement between roles producing ‘play’, pleasure and pornographic capital.

In their book on popfeminist activism (as discussed in the previous chapter), Smith-Prei and Stehle write of the political power of awkwardness and note that contemporary protests often share an awkward closeness or complicity with the object of their ire. The awkward voyeur also occupies a simultaneously powerful and complicit position: looking, but not being seen, identifying but not becoming. Smith-Prei and Stehle cite Elif Batuman in a *New Yorker* essay: ‘Awkwardness is the consciousness of a false position [...] awkward implies both solidarity and implication’ (2014). Similarly, the voyeur is structurally implicated in the observed scene and imagines a unity of feeling indicative of solidarity. The authors also note that awkwardness is ‘a political position that is not always clearly legible, that is on the move – and slippery’ (2016, p. 35). The awkward voyeur’s position is equally slippery and ‘on the move’, as discussed above through a compensatory process involving losing and mastering power. The voyeur’s position is slippery by virtue of being hidden, and illegible due to its awkward nature, and implied violation of social norms. The violated social norms include gender: as noted above, the awkward voyeur consumes furniture and

domesticity in equal proportion to pornography, contemporaneously treading a line between femininity and masculinity. His (and crucially, it is always 'his') position is also awkward because, although *Playboy* encourages its readers to become voyeurs and takes the male gaze public, the voyeur is, by definition, a private figure.

The awkward voyeur's position, in the context of *Playboy*, is also fundamentally political. The voyeur is awkwardly suspended between social conservatism and domesticity, and eroticised homes and sexual promiscuity. *Playboy* readers flip through a magazine of naked women performing domestic chores, which reflects a juxtaposition of emergent pharmacopornography and fifties American capitalism: their gaze eroticises the home. In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado writes that 'the pharmacopornographic business is the invention of a subject and its subsequent global reproduction' (2013, p. 36). 'Pharmacopornographic biocapitalism' produces desires, 'mobile ideas' and 'chemical reactions', rather than 'things' (p. 54). Thus, the awkward voyeur's gaze contributes to the invention of the pharmacopornographic subject. According to Preciado, pharmacopornography is the 'production of sexual subjectivity', which the awkward voyeur embodies through his doubled roles of actor and spectator: he both produces and is produced through his sexuality (p. 211). Ultimately, the awkward voyeur exemplifies the tension between 'things' and 'desires', and the shift from material production (domesticity) to immaterial production (pornography) through a focus on sexual subjectivity. Preciado affirms that 'there is no object to be produced in biotechnology and in porno-communication': rather, pharmacopornography necessitates the invention of the pharmacopornographic subject and its reproduction (p. 36).

But the shift from 'things' to 'desires' is neither smooth nor complete: domesticity and pornography are not only juxtaposed through the voyeur's awkward gaze, they are intertwined. This amalgam expresses the awkward collision between paternalistic capitalism, historically bound to morality and the Protestant work ethic, according to Max Weber, which encouraged the subordination of sexual pleasure to work and God; and incipient patriarchal, pharmacopornographic capitalism with ties to market liberalism. Wolfgang Streeck writes that 'discontinuity is always embedded in some continuity. If we say that a society has ended, we mean that certain features of its organisation that we consider essential to it have disappeared; others may well have survived' (2014). Equally, moral laws defining the Protestant work ethic survived beyond the attempted displacement of paternalistic capitalism by its pharmacopornographic successor.

Streek writes that ‘theories of capitalism [...] were always also theories of crisis’, and that late capitalism ‘gave way to neoliberalism’ in the 1970s (2016, p. 3). But Streek also notes that capitalism requires a ‘a labour process capable of sustaining a neo protestant work ethic alongside socially obligatory hedonistic consumerism’ (p. 45). Early *Playboy* readers were typically wealthy city-workers, well-placed to purchase the accoutrements of the successful bachelor; simultaneously, the magazine exuded ‘obligatory hedonistic consumerism’ as its necessary corollary. Thus, the awkward voyeur, as a precursor and inventor of the pharmacopornographic subject, represents both investment in the ‘neo protestant work ethic’ and ‘obligatory hedonistic consumerism’ embedded in *Playboy*.

Ultimately, the conception of the awkward voyeur is also inherently awkward: the *Playboy* reader fits awkwardly with the voyeur-performer of the Playboy mansion. Preciado elides the *Playboy* reader and the pharmacopornographic subject without acknowledging the development from the one-directional gaze of the *Playboy* reader to the awkward, multiple vision of the pharmacopornographic subject. The *Playboy* reader is a private consumer and voyeur, in comparison, the awkward voyeur, by virtue of being watched and performing, is a public commodity. Awkward voyeurism involves multiple instances of ‘looking in’ occurring simultaneously, globally. At the height of *Playboy*’s popularity, American culture was preoccupied with the ‘home’ and keeping up with the Joneses: the nose over the hedge, and the eyes on the car or patch of lawn encouraged culturally-ingrained conspicuous consumption. The gaze was directed inwards: architecturally, socially, politically, and in *Pornotopia*, awkwardness intensifies this predilection. Awkward voyeurism problematizes the (male) gaze through acknowledging our complicity, our performance, and our status as ‘watched’ as well as ‘watching’.

Crucially, awkward voyeurism is both deeper ‘inside’ and more public than voyeurism: in the imagined *Playboy* bachelor pad, the voyeur takes out his binoculars and watches the girl-next-door. In comparison, the awkward voyeur turns to the camera, watches the exchange of a gaze and exposes himself: physically, sexually and emotionally. Preciado writes that *Playboy* would ‘become the first pornotopia’ of the pharmacopornographic age: this pornotopia is made possible through my intermediary figure of the awkward voyeur, who, contributing to Preciado’s account, enables the transformation from intimate pornography to the co-creation and production of capital, eroticism, and space, and an age characterised by awkward, powerful visuality (p. 77). Preciado’s following book, *Testo Junkie* opens with him filming himself inserting two dildos, awkwardly displaying the acts of watching and performing, in order to be watched, and in order to perform – his pliable

gender, sexuality and philosophy. Thus, *Pornotopia*'s analysis of visual politics becomes the pharmacopornographic *method of Testo Junkie*.

## Conclusion

Cited above, McClintock writes that voyeurism's logic is 'founded on the loss of control': 'the pleasure arises from mastering in fantasy a situation that is fundamentally dangerous and threatening' (p. 129). McClintock also writes that voyeurism 'dramatises the violation of a threshold: the keyhole, the window, the camera aperture. Voyeurism acknowledges a barrier to pleasure, a limit to power, and then transgresses the limit, reclaiming power in a forbidden excess of pleasure. Indeed, the fact that an act is forbidden makes it pleasurable' (p. 129). Significantly, McClintock writes that 'voyeurism expresses a refusal to accept a boundary to the self and its pleasures', which expresses a similar pharmacopornographic absorption with the production of subjectivities and affect (p. 129). When *Playboy* published its first edition in 1953, its photos expressed the 'violation of a threshold': it acknowledged contemporaneous barriers to pleasure and transgressed sexual norms in a bid to assert the body's sexual (and economic) power. The sexually conservative mood of the country enhanced the reader's voyeuristic pleasure: 'forbidden' pleasures were more pleasurable. But *Playboy* and similar magazines succeeded in expressing voyeurism's refusal of a 'boundary to the self and its pleasures' as pharmacopornography became a dominant capitalist force (McClintock, p. 129). As Batuman wrote: in the 1980s, 'pure capitalism became its own value system, sustained by opposition to the Soviet Union' (2014). Pharmacopornography was affirmed and strengthened through confrontation with an opposing 'value system' – an older, more morally conservative form of capitalism.

Ultimately, as *Pornotopia* examines, *Playboy* is both produced by and produces pharmacopornography: Preciado interrogates the slipperiness of this form of capitalism, which mutates and proves its flexibility through co-option. See, for example, *Playboy*'s embrace of its own brand of feminism.<sup>7</sup> For Preciado, *Playboy* exemplifies the relationship between bodies, architecture and pharmacopornography – and pharmacopornography's central concern is:

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<sup>7</sup> See Hugh Hefner here: <<https://www.cosmopolitan.com/entertainment/news/a42407/hugh-hefner-what-ive-learned/>>, Hugh Hefner, 2015, *Cosmopolitan*, accessed: 31/05/2018. Or Cooper Hefner here: <<https://web.archive.org/web/20170705122826/http://www.playboy.com/articles/the-playboy-philosophy-2017-feminism/>>, Cooper Hefner, 2017, *Playboy*, accessed: 31/05/2018. Or here: <<https://instagram.com/p/BMaYOWijA5d/>>, Cooper Hefner, 2016, Instagram, accessed 31/05/2018.

Gradual miniaturization, internalization and reflexive introversion [...] of the surveillance and control mechanisms of the disciplinary political regime. These new soft biopolitical technologies adopt the form of the body they control, become part of the organism until they are inseparable and indistinguishable from it, and ultimately become subjects. In the pharmacopornographic regime, the body no longer inhabits disciplinary spaces, it is inhabited by them. Architecture exists in us (2013, p.79).

Preciado conflates architecture and the body in order to imply their co-construction and production, but also to emphasise possible agency. Bio-technologies are crucial to Preciado's conceptions of agency and somato-political praxis (p. 142). Here, Preciado makes clear the necessity of denaturalising gender and sexuality in order to emphasise architecture. Gender and sexuality are exploited and co-opted, but if architecture 'exists in us', we can learn how it works, and how we can interfere in its functioning (p. 79).

The awkward voyeur, through the 'play' of separation and contact, masochism and sadism, also exemplifies the co-production of bodies and architecture characteristic of pharmacopornography. This dynamic, of interference, intravenous resistance becomes the conflict between resistance and compliance in *Testo Junkie*: Muñoz's 'working on and against' (1999, p. 11). The awkward voyeur's Junkspace also forms the landscape of pharmacopornography, and the context for 'biodrag': Preciado's drag-testo-project. Thus, *Pornotopia* provides the theoretical structure for the development of pharmacopornography in *Testo Junkie*. This chapter has outlined how pharmacopornography has not replaced historical forms of capitalism – rather it continues to engage with them – spatially and visually. Crucially, *Pornotopia* emphasises the centrality of design to pharmacopornography. The voyeur/spectator is designed and produced through relations and interactions with spaces and buildings, but, as this chapter illustrates, he also designs and produces, through surveillance and self-surveillance.

Ultimately, the *Playboy* model of one-directional voyeurism is defunct: as pharmacopornography strengthens its hold, it relies less on the effective myth of oppositional power and transgression, and more on awkward politics and visibility. Preciado acknowledges that his work is an 'autopsy': *Playboy* is dead, or dying, but he writes that its work has been accomplished:

It has long ago fulfilled what it set out to do, namely to construct a collective sexual imaginary capable of implementing [...] a new set of affects, bodily habits, and desires that prepared the shift from a disciplinary society, with its repressive norms and bodily regulations, toward a pharmacopornographic regime characterized by immaterial labour, postdomestic space, the psychotropic and chemical regulation of subjectivity, prosthetic extensions of the sexual body, electronic sexual surveillance, and consumption of intimacy (2014, p. 219).

In comparison with Preciado's description, *Playboy* modestly, quaintly claims to have been 'proudly raising eyebrows' for sixty years (2018). Perhaps, here, Preciado over-attributes, or inflates *Playboy*'s contribution to the development of pharmacopornography. Did it 'set out' to implement new affects and desires, or precipitate the shift from a disciplinary society to a pharmacopornographic regime? However, inarguably, *Playboy* foreshadowed the 'global [...] multimedia laboratory-brothel', examined further through *Testo Junkie* (2013, p. 50).

To conclude: *Pornotopia* is structured in the same way as awkward voyeurism: Preciado is both 'actor' and 'spectator', he observes the *Playboy* voyeur, and produces the pharmacopornographic subject through his representation. Preciado congratulates *Playboy* for their invention of a 'sexual imaginary' and a pharmacopornographic subject with new affects, habits and desires, but, *Pornotopia* also constructs this subject, through narratively observing, performing and producing, through representation. Here, *Pornotopia* is visually defined through *mise en abyme*: an infinite series of mirrored, internal representations. As part of this iterative process, the new pharmacopornographic subject contributes to Preciado's theorization and analysis of pharmacopornography in *Testo Junkie*. This pharmacopornographic subject, *Pornotopia* concludes, is distinctly male: the book explores the origins of the male gaze that permeates *Testo Junkie*, and examines how pharmacopornography is developed through male voyeurism, exhibitionism and performativity. But potent voyeurism, which embodies both disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power is also awkward. This chapter has explored how awkward voyeurism, in contrast with one-directional *Playboy* voyeurism, produces the pharmacopornographic subject of *Testo Junkie* – an actor/spectator defined by both disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power and vision.

Haraway writes that vision, in the 'technological feast' becomes 'unregulated gluttony': 'all perspective gives way to infinitely mobile vision' (1988, p. 581). She notes the relationship between vision and masculinity: the eyes, and conceptions of vision, have

been shaped by the ‘history of science tied to militarism, capitalism, colonialism and male supremacy’ (p. 581). However, she also writes that prosthetic eyes, in various forms, ‘shatter any idea of passive vision’: our eyes, bio or techno, are ‘active perceptual systems’ (p. 583). *Pornotopia* and my exploration of awkward voyeurism both emphasize the importance of recognizing vision as ‘active’ and embodied: as Haraway writes, we must insist on the ‘particularity and embodiment of all vision’, as feminist practice (p. 582). This process of embodiment and particularization aims to decouple vision and masculinity, take advantage of the awkwardness of vision and voyeurism, emphasize the centrality of vision, perspective, and voyeurism to pharmacopornography, and to advocate embodied, situated ways of both seeing (incidental) and watching (intentional). *Pornotopia*, in this respect, provides the method and perspective for *Testo Junkie*.

## The Sex Worker

‘*Gloriam penetrationis*’ (Preciado 2013, p. 318).

In *Caliban and the Witch*, Silvia Federici traces the ‘birth of the body’ and its enshrinement as a political signifier (2004, p. 18). Federici argues, in the Marxist tradition, that the body is a site of alienation and exploitation. Federici writes that bodily alienation can only be overcome ‘with the end of the work-discipline that defines it’ (p. 18). But, in *Testo Junkie*, the ‘work-discipline’ now encompasses, or has been replaced by, the pleasure-discipline. Understanding and exploiting the body’s potential for pleasure has become a crucial means of generating capital: Preciado describes this sexual potential as *potentia gaudendi*, or ‘orgasmic force’ (p. 43). ‘Pornpower’, in Preciado’s writing, is an intensification of Foucault’s conception of biopower – defined as power over bodies: ‘un pouvoir destiné à produire des forces, à les faire croître’ (Foucault 1976, p. 179). In Preciado’s conception, bodies have become increasingly defined by *potentia gaudendi*, which expresses a new form of work and labour: ‘the economy of ejaculation’ (p. 293).

Preciado criticizes Paolo Virno’s understanding of immaterial labour as linguistic, and eschews Hardt and Negri’s use of ‘biopolitical’, on the basis that their descriptions of the body are desexualized: ‘the crux of work has become sexual [...] if you’re expecting any economic benefit from work, it must produce the effect of a fix’ (p. 293). To replace ‘biopolitical’, Preciado offers: ‘pharmacopornopolitical’; he writes: ‘Let’s stop beating about the bush and say it: in a porn economy, there is no work that isn’t destined to cause a hard-on, to keep the global cock erect, no work that doesn’t trigger the secretion of endorphins, no work that doesn’t reinforce the feeling of omnipotence of your basic heteromacho consumer’ (p. 293). For Preciado, pharmacopornography describes how the only ‘authentic surplus value’ is the ‘index of the cock’s levitation, its hardness and rigidity, the volume of its spermatic ejaculation [...] there is no work that isn’t wet work’ (pp. 293-4). Other forms of profit are eked out, here and there, but, according to Preciado, ‘sex work’ is pharmacopornography’s referent.

Preciado’s insistence that all work is *sex work* also emphasizes the reverse: sex work is *work*. Helen Hester writes that Porn Studies has a ‘blind spot’: the field contends with the ‘legacy of the sex wars’ and defining a discipline, but fails to engage with conceptions of sex work as wage labour (Laing 2015, p. 37). Feona Attwood notes the increase in queer

porn producers and performers, but adds that ‘although new porn professionals have attracted a great deal of attention, relatively little interest has been paid to what they do as a form of labour’ (2015, p. 98). Attwood writes that sex work is depicted and perceived to be a product of ‘illegitimate industries, exploitation and dirty money’, a perception which Hester claims entrenches the division between ‘sex work’ and ‘work’ (p. 98). This division between sex work and work is exposed as false in Preciado’s ‘porn economy’: wet work emphasizes the central functions of pleasure, frustration and satisfaction in pharmacopornographic regimes of power.

And Preciado’s descriptions of ‘cocks’, ‘hard-ons’ and ‘spermatic ejaculation’ foreground our embodied complicity, or collaboration, with pornpower. Federici writes that when power is diffused, and reconstituted in bodies as ‘micro states’, it does not ‘lose its vector, that is, its content and its aims, but simply acquires the collaboration of the self in their promotion’ (p. 149). Federici adds, following Foucault, that ‘self-ownership is assumed to be the fundamental social relation’, thus discipline no longer relies on external coercion, rather self-government becomes an ‘essential requirement’ (p. 149). Or, more succinctly: ‘the individual would function at once as both master and slave’ (p. 150).

Sex work neatly demonstrates the dominance of this means of power, through Preciado’s ‘pornographic imperative’: ‘fuck you yourself’ (2013, p. 265). ‘Fuck you yourself’ encompasses self-discipline, productive (capital-generating) masturbation with pornography, and the frustrating, self-regulatory condition of playing the roles of both master and slave. Preciado has written that ‘there are no objects to produce. It’s a matter of inventing a subject and producing it on a global scale’: for example, the sex worker (p. 54). *Potentia gaudendi* is theorised through work and capital, and if all work is ‘wet work’, consequentially, all workers are wet workers, or sex workers – to some degree or another. This chapter will explore Preciado’s conceptions of sex work and sex workers in *Testo Junkie*, primarily through two dominant features of pharmacopornography: pornography and the contraceptive pill. ‘The Sex Worker’ also analyses Preciado’s work on dildos, and subjectification through pornpower. Ultimately, the chapter examines how Preciado’s ‘sex worker’ contributes to our understanding of pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

## **Pornography**

Preciado writes that pornography is culturally dominant, and a paradigm for all other forms of production (p. 271). According to Preciado, other industries admire how pornography

affects the body and our ‘techno-organic centres of the production of subjectivity’, and they aspire to a similar ‘efficiency’ (2013, p. 271). Despite its relatively concealed nature, pornography stimulates pleasure, affect and comfort with regularity and success; as Preciado notes, other industries are characterised by ‘porn envy’ (p. 271). Pornography is sexualised production: it converts the body into information and its ‘closed circuit of excitation-capital-frustration-excitation-capital’ is a means of understanding and maximising other types of production (p. 271). If all conceivable means of production aim to approach the efficient pornography paradigm, pornographic logics and narratives are, presumably, culturally pervasive. Furthermore, eliding pornography with sex further expands the territory of the global sex worker. If we acknowledge the cultural dominance of pornography, along with its corollary: a global desperation to replicate its affective impact, it becomes necessary to examine the bodies of its contingent ‘sex workers’, in order to deconstruct its affective logic.

Firstly, ‘pornpower’ requires bodies that are vulnerable to the manipulation (in a non-pejorative sense) of affect; statistics reflecting the worldwide consumption of pornography indicate its success. These bodies are vulnerable not in a subjective, existential sense, but in contingent and relational terms. Secondly, pornography predominantly depicts seemingly invulnerable bodies: invulnerable to disease, discomfort and finitude. Finally, this synthesis of bodies is galvanised into the repetitive rhythm of ‘excitation-capital-frustration-excitation-capital’ – Preciado’s pornographic rhythm (p. 271).

Our vulnerability to pornography is well-established; accordingly, we turn to pornpower’s depiction of invulnerable sex workers. In an article for *The New York Times*, Susan Sontag writes of this pornographic illusion: ‘Sexual energy is not endlessly renewable; sexual acts cannot be tirelessly repeated’ (1976). Yet bodies in pornography are generally strong and indefatigable: editing allows viewers to sustain this illusion. In mainstream pornography, bodies are directed and moved; through unseen processes of editing, they appear inexhaustibly sexual. As Preciado writes: ‘using a host of technical media generates a butterfly effect in the global management of the cycles of excitation-frustration-excitation: a pussy opening in one place, a mouth sucking in another, producing hundreds of releasings of pleasure at the other end of the world as their virtual displacement emits a living flow of capital’ (p. 266).

Microporn, a new and popular form of pornography, reveals this ‘living flow of capital’, and produces another layer of invulnerability. Microporn is comprised of porn gifs, or vines – clips lasting only a few seconds, most commonly of a ‘meat shot’ or a ‘money shot’, either a close-up of a penis entering a vagina, or a penis ejaculating. These clips run

on an endless loop, and pages are devoted to hundreds of gifs of relentlessly pounding bodies. Susan Sontag's description of pornography as 'motiveless, tireless transactions of depersonalised organs' is a prescient description of microporn (2001, p. 98). Ultimately, the most contemporary brand of pornography depicts tirelessly invulnerable bodies, clips sliced from longer films for their concentration of affect. As Sarah Harman notes, microporn dismisses the need for narrative: the bodies rarely have heads, names or backgrounds (2014). Microporn also emphasises the role of technological advances in the consumption of pornography. With the introduction of VHS, porn consumers could fast forward, freeze or replay moments, to intensify their erotic experience; this freedom also rejects the centrality of narrative. Porn gifs and vines dismiss narrative altogether: only 'meat shots', ejaculatory shots, or titillating gifs of breasts are required. This dismissal of narrative intensifies the consumer's disassociation from porn actors, or people sharing personal vines: they become easily manipulated bodies that can be flipped around, edited and enhanced.

Microporn's depiction of invulnerable bodies is revealed in its exhortation to experiment: you can cut a clip from a film and flip the image sideways, or upside down, change the colours, or speed it up, but still retain the integrity of the heroically indestructible pornographic body. In microporn, although the editor/viewer is manipulating the form rather than the body itself, the body and the form have become indivisible. This merging of the body with the form increases the indefatigability of the pornographic body – gifs can be endlessly manipulated. Microporn also embodies Preciado's conception of pornography: 'a pussy opening in one place, a mouth sucking in another', 'virtual displacement', a 'living flow of capital' (p. 266). The body of the invulnerable sex worker traverses flows and capital and epitomises endless manipulability, thus the equally endless 'flow' of pleasure. This continuous pleasure 'flow' is required, in order to approach the pornography paradigm, and capture its money-making rhythm of 'excitation-capital-frustration' (p. 271).

But the vulnerable/invulnerable sex worker binary is complicated by Preciado's description of the pornographic gaze: 'pornographic excitation is structured by the boomerang', meaning 'pleasure in the desubjectification of the other/pleasure in the desubjectification of the self' (p. 269). This desubjectification involves both the spectator and the actor watching themselves reduced to *potentia gaudendi*. Following Foucault, Preciado writes that the spectator has the impression that, through subjectification, he possesses the *potentia gaudendi* of the porn actors; but, simultaneously, the spectator's body is 'reduced to an involuntary receiver of ejaculatory stimuli, thereby putting him in a position deprived of any power to make sexual decisions' (p. 270). Thus, Preciado notes that

pornographic subjectivity is made distinctive through the ‘visual swallowing of its own sperm, the fact of simultaneously being both a universal erect cock and a universal receiving anus’ (p. 293). Foucault defines subjectification as the process through which a person becomes a subject; notably, these subjects are created through division: both internal division and division from other people (1984, p. 706). Here, the sex worker is created by multiple processes of division, both within herself and from others: she alternately possesses and loses control of perceived and intangible *potentia gaudendi*; she is defined by both wielding and receiving power and pleasure, as well as generating capital and contributing to the pornographic rhythm of excitation-capital-frustration. The product of a pornographic gaze, like the awkward voyeur, the sex worker is a composite of both vulnerable and the invulnerable, actor and spectator: they represent the space on which power and pleasure are repeatedly lost and won, their ‘virtual displacement’ emitting a ‘living flow of capital’ (p. 266).

The pornographic logic described by Preciado dictates that bodies must be incorporated into the rhythm of excitation-capital-frustration-excitation: we must now examine the central function of frustration. The goal of pornography, according to Preciado, is not the ‘production of pleasure’, but the control of political subjectivity through managing the ‘excitation-frustration circuit’ (p. 271): the purpose of porn is the ‘production of *frustrating satisfaction*’ (p. 271). Preciado quotes porn actor and activist Lydia Lunch in *Testo Junkie*: ‘I sell frustration, not relief’ (2013, p.271). But frustration not only generates capital, it suffuses sexual experience, and appears to be a function of pleasure: Preciado writes of ‘pleasure (in its capacity as frustrating satisfaction)’ (p. 309).

Equally, Bataille wrote that ‘l’orgie est nécessairement décevante’ – according to Bataille, orgies are inherently confusing and negate individuality (Bataille 1987, p. 112). Steven Shaviro has written that orgies always end in ‘disillusionment and boredom’, because, however hard you try, ‘you can never be promiscuous enough’: complete and final excitation is always elusive (1997, p. 131). Similarly, Aaron Schuster describes the frustration inherent in Sadeian orgies: the libertine is perpetually taunted by a ‘cruel super-ego’ which ‘berates him for his relatively impotent orgies of destruction even as he becomes more and more perfectly debauched’ (2016, p. 41). According to Schuster, libertinism is ‘haunted by the figure of the bad infinite. Its cold enjoyment is bound up with the dream of the final destruction of the system that it can never realise, and in truth does not want to, for it is the system of destruction that the sadist faithfully serves’ (p. 41). Schuster uses Hegel’s conception of the ‘bad’, or ‘spurious’ infinite, which expresses the negation of the finite, to

describe ‘the futility of desire’ (p. 41). Here the sadist is comparable to the viewer of pornography, in the sense that pornography is bound up with imagining ‘real’ sex, and the end of (the need for) pornography.

But pornography establishes an effective system of excitation and frustration that provides continual pleasure, thus is rarely abandoned. Here, pleasure’s role in frustrating satisfaction is evident: pleasure brackets excitation and frustration, ensuring that satisfaction is elusive. Returning to sadism: critics often dismiss Sade’s texts as ‘boring’ and ‘monotonous’, in some cases possibly to avoid admitting arousal (according to Barthes, Pompidou declared Sade ‘very boring’) (2009, p. 253). But Sade’s sex scenes are so numerous that arousal and boredom often share the same territory. As Benjamin Noys writes: ‘the relentless iterations of 120 Days of Sodom produce the deadening sense of timetabled labour’ (2014, p. 35). Ultimately, pleasure and boredom are not necessarily distinct categories. Linda Williams notes that rather than pleasure being something achieved when ‘boredom is bracketed’, the pleasure of pornography ‘derives from the experience of boredom’ (2004, p. 251). Equating boredom with frustration, and pleasure with excitation, it becomes clear how they continually replace each other in the rhythm described by Preciado, which is the syntax of frustration, and pornographic composition.

Thus, the sex worker is defined through the fact that the ‘pleasure of the pornographic eye resides in a cruel contradiction’, and a bodily division between vulnerability and invulnerability (p. 270). But she is also stranded between power regimes, both disciplinary and pharmacopornographic: in Preciado’s writing, sex workers are ‘creatures condemned to constant self-surveillance and self-control’, while subject to the pornographic imperative: ‘fuck you yourself’, which encompasses frustration, excitation and the production of capital, but rarely relief or satisfaction (p. 138).

If self-surveillance is defined as private work, sex workers are also involved in public work: Preciado writes that ‘pornography is sexuality transformed into spectacle’ (p. 266). Pornography shares the characteristics of any other spectacle in the culture industry: ‘performance, virtuosity, dramatization [...] technical reproducibility’ (p. 266). Online pornography data gathering epitomizes the technical reproducibility of the spectacle, enabling enhanced performance and dramatization and moulding the body through pornographic preferences. In Preciado’s writing, the pornographic ‘spectacle’ is the presentation of a penetrable body, a body defined by ‘openings’: ‘a pussy opening in one place, a mouth sucking in another’ (p. 266). This body is inevitably gendered: the ‘pussy opening’ and the ‘mouth sucking’ are tropes of female pornographic performers. Preciado

writes that the ‘common condition’ of ‘feminine’ bodies is ‘appearing as bodies that are penetrable (by capital), bodies that provoke ejaculation’ (p. 295).

‘Common condition’ and ‘provoke’ connote a chronic, incurable disease, and images of men driven wild by uncontrollable desire. Preciado both writes that ‘each worker enters the pharmacoporn factory as penetrable-penetrating [...] or both’, and that ‘only the bodies of cis-females, trans-females and gays are considered to be *potentially penetrable* bodies’ (p. 303, my italics). Preciado writes that these ‘segmentations are gradually destabilized’, here meaning the division between penetrating and penetrable, yet affirms that he has an ‘insatiable instinct to penetrate’ and writes of cis males ‘preserving their position as universal penetrators’, with a degree of awe (pp. 303-318). For Preciado, all sex workers are equal, but some are more equal than others: we are all penetrable by virtue of multiple ‘openings’, and ‘potentially penetrating’, by virtue of possessing ‘a tongue, fingers, an arm’; thus, we are all penetrable-penetrating (p. 303). But, ‘cis-females, trans-females and gays’ are *more* potentially penetrable.

Ultimately, Preciado’s descriptions of sex work express, and possibly endorse, the cultural valorization of penetrating over penetrable. Preciado suggests that porn actresses, when ending their careers, should ‘take testosterone and change genders’; ‘no one would ever guess that a bitch in heat could be hidden behind the features of an anonymous porn consumer’ (p. 303). He writes that these trans-men could then return to porn work, extending the span of their careers beyond the normal length of cis-women porn stars, adding that he will ‘refrain from a stream of commentaries on the pharmacopornographic pleasure there’d be in seeing a technoharder version of Nina Roberts having it off with all the porn stars’ – affirming the ‘segmentations’ that he promises are ‘gradually destabilized’ (p. 303). For Preciado, the ultimate sex worker is a cis-woman porn star, who, upon retiring, takes testosterone and claims both her prize and revenge by ‘having it off’ as a trans-man with cis-women (p. 303).

Here, Preciado’s conceptions of the body as independent, agentic or powerful through penetration appear masculinist (in terms of advocating the needs or rights of men). His chapter recalls Butler’s accounts of vulnerability: she notes a ‘disavowed dependency at the heart of the masculinist idea of the body’, and adds that a political subject does not establish agency by ‘vanquishing its vulnerability’, rather vulnerability must be mobilized and the binary of vulnerability and agency destabilized (2014). But Preciado rejects Butler’s interpretation of vulnerability-as-resistance in relation to pornography. For Preciado, disruption takes the form of ‘copyleft’ and cyber hacking techniques, which he urges us to

apply to pornography: ‘we theorists of the post-porn era are emphasizing the notion of [...] ‘public sex’, to conceive of the cooperation between bodies, desires, impulses...’ (pp. 307-8). Here, ‘public sex’ refers to transparently constructed sexuality rather than pornographic spectacle.

Perhaps these ‘copyleft’ techniques are visible in the rise of microporn: microporn could be described as symbolic of current porn consumption, demonstrating shorter attention spans, over-stimulation and disassociation. But microporn is normally filmed by amateurs, or cut from longer films into gif form by fans; so, this format seems to represent both intense bodily disassociation and the development of a participatory culture (Harman, 2014). Gifs and vines are also often numbered, rather than labelled, fitting less neatly into standard porn categories (2014). Microporn depicts malleable, invulnerable bodies, and represents the apex of contemporary consumption, but it also indicates the continued growth of the video DIY porn sector (which began with video cameras and ‘home movies’) with the potential for shaping different conceptions of pleasure to the controlled preferences of popular porn sites.

Furthermore, perhaps agency is discernible in Preciado’s ‘boomerang’ model: in which subjectification becomes desubjectification, and vulnerability becomes invulnerability (p. 269). In Preciado’s writing, the pornographic gaze is a boomerang, configuring its sex workers as invulnerable as quickly as it configures them vulnerable, passing the gaze back and forth. For Preciado, this gaze is fundamentally ‘cruel’ (p. 270). But perhaps understanding how our bodies are vulnerable involves an exhortation to make them less vulnerable, to eschew means of subjectification that produce agency contingent on vulnerability. However, Preciado’s sex workers are defined through (inevitably vulnerable) holes, and openings: Sartre has written that ‘*l’obscénité du sexe féminin est celle de toute chose beante [...] elle est trouée*’ (1965, p. 706). Angela Carter also writes of pornographic novelists ‘describing a woman’s mind through the fiction of her sexuality. This technique ensures that the gap left in the text is just the right size for the reader to insert his prick into’ (1978, p. 16). In the context of pornography, Preciado’s ‘sex workers’ are penetrable, rather than penetrating, epitomizing this tradition of reading women, cis or trans, through ‘holes’ and spaces.

Preciado also advocates post-porn for sex workers, a movement of re-appropriation: ‘Postporno is not an aesthetic, but the assemblage of experimental productions that emerge from movements for the politico-visual empowerment of sexual minorities’ (2015). Preciado names Annie Sprinkle, Veronica Vera and Diana Junyent as postporn participants.

But rather than describing post-porn, the only detail Preciado provides is that it involves ‘reclaiming the use of audiovisual devices for the production of sexuality’ (2015). Thus, pornography is a tool – capable of being appropriated or reclaimed by ‘pariahs of the pharmacopornographic system’ – whether sex workers, porn actors or transgender bodies. In Preciado’s writing, pornography is both a tool which produces sexuality, and a structure of subjectification which can be reclaimed. Similarly, Preciado writes that pornography ‘names a particular relationship between space and vision, publicity and privacy, between pleasure and surveillance, between the modern city and the representation of the body along the lines of gender, age, class, race and sexuality’ (Marks 2015, p. 260). Here, pornography is a technological prosthetic, capable of curative and poisonous tendencies. Or, as Laura Marks writes of Preciado’s description, pornography ‘facilitates a dualistic identity vacillating between potential victim and perpetrator, so as to evade the surveillance and control associated with either position’ (p. 260). Marks’s analysis describes pornography as a liminal postmodern space characterised by both disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power – capable of being evaded, or controlled, by a combined victim/perpetrator (p. 260).

In comparison, Preciado writes that pornography is a ‘disciplinary technique for managing public space and more particularly for controlling vision, for keeping potentially excited or excitable bodies under control in public space (2009, p. 27). His description presents pornography as distinctly disciplinary, rather than pharmacopornographic. Thus: pornography is both capable of defining our relationship with space, vision, privacy and pleasure in flexible terms, and is a disciplinary tool – used for managing errant bodies, spaces and perspectives. This distinction is gendered: all bodies are potentially excitable and subject to disciplinary techniques to control their vision and spaces. In comparison, marginalised bodies, theorised by Preciado through the sex worker, are subject to pornographic economies and pornpower, but without equal access to pleasure granted to the ‘hetero-macho consumer’ (p. 293).

The Playboy Mansion provides an architectural representation of pornography, both pharmacopornographic and disciplinary: the lower floors of the Mansion were defined by the pursuit of pleasure and the pornographic rhythm, the upper floors were disciplinary dormitories for Playmates – used to train sex workers in the production of pleasure. Pornography relies on both pharmacopornographic and disciplinary power, but grants access to pleasure predominantly to its ‘hetero-macho’ consumers (p. 293). Not coincidentally, Preciado describes pharmacopornography through the ‘global cock’, the ‘cock’s levitation’, and ‘spermatic ejaculation’ (p. 293). Furthermore, ‘levitation’ implies mystical, magical

movement, but taken satirically, it emphasises the *work* inherent in pharmacopornography – which he defines through sex work, or wet work. Generally, sex workers are responsible for the production of pleasure; hetero-macho consumers are responsible for the consumption of pleasure. Ultimately, in Preciado’s conception, pornography produces marginalised bodies, which are defined by their lack of agency, lack of access to pleasure (which can be reclaimed), and through holes and spaces. Preciado writes of the necessity of a staging a ‘partial escape from the dead-end of the feminist censorship debate’ (2009). But he also re-inscribes traditional conceptions of pornographic pleasure, and pornographic consumers and actors, through his theorisation of the sex worker. Preciado hopefully endorses post-porn, which he claims will ‘change everything’, but he also appears to endorse an economy of penetration inaccessible to his sex worker.

### **The Pill**

For Preciado, the contraceptive pill is comparable to pornography: ‘There’s no porn without the pill’, ‘There is no [...] pill without porn’ (p. 51). He writes that this new kind of sexual production implies a ‘detailed and strict control of the forces of reproduction of the species. There is no pornography without parallel surveillance and control of the body’s affects and fluids’ (p. 51). Preciado writes that the ‘dominant manifestations of the pharmacopornographic era’ are ‘pills, prostheses, food, images, fellatio, and double penetration’, manifestations relating to openings, or holes (p. 207). Both the pill and porn are ‘dominant manifestations’ defined by orality, spaces and holes – the pill-user and the sex worker described above are interchangeable. The pill and porn also both appear to function through disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power.

In a chapter on ‘Pharmacopower’, the pill is described in relation to three circular ‘openings’: the panopticon surveillance tower, the DialPak, and the mouth. Firstly, Preciado memorably compares the pill pack with Jeremy Bentham’s design for the panopticon prison, which enabled constant surveillance: ‘the contraceptive pill is an edible panopticon (p. 202), ‘we can think of the pill as a lightweight, portable, individualised chemical panopticon’ (p. 205), ‘the surveillance tower has been replaced by the eyes of [...] the user of the pill who regulates her own administration without the need for external supervision’ (p. 205), and ‘The whip has been replaced by a convenient system of oral administration, henceforth, the prison cell has become the body of the consumer, which sees itself chemically modified’ (p. 205). Here, women’s bodies are designated as both ‘natural object(s) of intervention’,

permanently open, and constantly moving, in processes of self-regulation (p. 168). The design of the panopticon enabled continual observation from the central, circular watchtower, but also prevented inmates from seeing inside the watchtower: they were unable to ascertain whether they were being monitored. Accordingly, these prisoners would, theoretically, perpetually regulate their behaviour *as if* they were being watched. As Bentham promised the Committee for the Reform of Criminal Law: this prison design will ‘cost nothing to the nation’, for a gaoler need not be permanently present (2013, p. 979). Preciado describes the pill and the woman’s body in relation to parts of the panopticon: the body acts as both prison and self-regulating inmate, while the pill designates the boundaries of the body, and exhorts self-discipline from the watchtower. Thus, comparable to the awkward voyeur, playing the roles of both actor and spectator, the sex worker, depicted through the pill and pornography, is simultaneously vulnerable and invulnerable, and both prisoner and gaoler of her own body: the sex worker is defined by regulated openness.

Preciado’s description of the woman-as-panopticon reveals a divided body: ‘the surveillance tower has been replaced by the eyes of the [...] user of the pill’ (p. 205). If the user of the pill is both prison and gaoler, she is defined by uncomfortable division, her eyes twisted inwards, and her eyes and body awkwardly at odds. Preciado also describes the ‘chemical panopticon’ as ‘lightweight’ and ‘portable’, presumably implying the pill (p. 205). But if the woman’s body also represents the panopticon, his description indicates her awareness of the portable and lightweight nature of her own body: she is (quite literally) a moveable feast – defined by both portability and orality (pp. 201-205). Her skin represents the limits of her bodily agency; the pill binds her to self-implemented pharmacological subjectification. Preciado further notes that women taking the pill, or ‘the body of the consumer’, can ‘see itself chemically modified’ (p. 235). Despite the woman’s position as self-styled gaoler, Preciado implies a visual/body disconnect: the gaoler-eyes observe the chemical regulation of the prison-body. Accordingly, the sex worker not only performs the roles of both prisoner and gaoler, but her body is portioned into these roles: like the awkward voyeur, she watches the performance of her own subjectification and desubjectification.

Preciado also describes the pill through the DialPak, a round compact with holes which contains pills, labelled with the days of the week. Preciado writes that the DialPak ‘transformed the panopticon into a domestic, portable, female hormonal compact’ and that the pill was the ‘first pharmaceutical molecule to be produced as a design object’ (p. 195). Preciado adds that the pill is ‘not only a chemical product [...] but also an individual portable pharmacomechanism, able to discipline the tablet’s intake’; the pill ‘cannot exist without

the dispenser' (p. 195). Thus, Preciado equates the pill with the DialPak: the DialPak is not only a recognisable signifier of the pill, but *produces* the pill as a portable 'pharmacomechanism', capable of dispensing discipline (p. 195). In turn, the pill produces the woman. Preciado also directly compares the architecture of Bentham's panopticon to the design of the DialPak: the DialPak, like the panopticon, is circular, with rectangular cells (holes for the pills) radiating away from the centre. The significant difference: the hole in the centre of the DialPak. A surveillance tower is unnecessary, because the woman taking the pill fulfils that function. Accordingly, the DialPak could be interpreted as an intensification of Bentham's Panopticon: the prisoners, accustomed to self-regulation, fail to notice when the watchtower is removed. As Preciado writes later in *Testo Junkie*: 'we are certainly still confronting a form of social control, but this time it's a matter of control lite, a bubbly type of control, full of colours and wearing Mickey Mouse ears', in comparison with the 'cold, disciplinary architecture of the panoptic illustrated by Foucault' (p. 211). The DialPak epitomises Preciado's 'control lite': a design product that closely resembles a makeup compact, its Mickey Mouse ears concealing its panoptic effects and affects.

Consequently, the DialPak is defined by camouflage: it both conceals its chemical product and its function as a portable 'pharmacomechanism' (p. 195). Preciado also adds that the DialPak resembles a rotary dial telephone, the 'most popular domestic communication appliance of the Cold War years': 'the circular box established abstract relationships between three systems – holes, numbers and network stations for the phone, and holes, Pills and the dates of the menstrual cycle for the DialPak' (p. 197). Preciado notes that this spatialisation of time combines 'architecture, design, and body movement transforming the user into an efficient (non-) reproducing machine', epitomising Foucault's 'anatomic-chronological scheme of action' (p. 197).

Preciado then moves on from Foucault's 'docile bodies' and temporal regulation in the context of the DialPak. But further analysis of his development of time spatialisation contributes to our understanding of the sex worker, and her role in relation to pharmacopornographic subjectivity (p. 197). Foucault's description of 'une sorte de schéma anatomo-chronologique du comportement' (which Preciado, or his translator, misquotes, or references incorrectly), describes military behaviour, broken down into components (1979, p. 15). Foucault describes 'Ordonnance du 1er janvier 1766, pour régler l'exercice de l'infanterie', a military ordinance which prescribes precise, temporally determined movements and exact marching techniques: 'celle du petit pas et du pas ordinaire sera d'une seconde, pendant laquelle on fera deux pas redoubles', for example (1979, p. 15). Each

movement is designated a direction and a duration, together forming a habit, or a behaviour. The English translation of *Testo Junkie*, written by Bruce Benderson in collaboration with Preciado, misquotes Foucault's description of time spatialisation as 'scheme of action', rather than the more appropriate 'scheme of behaviour' (p. 197). Behaviour encodes the forming of bodily rhythms; 'action' implies finitude, whereas behaviour implies patterns and repetition capable of producing bodies. Not only does the DialPak, thus something we might term 'time design', produce bodies, but it can penetrate bodies. Foucault writes: 'Le temps pénètre le corps, et avec lui tous les contrôles minutieux du pouvoir' (1979, p. 152). Thus, Preciado's sex worker is penetrated by both pornography and the pill: she is defined, again, as penetrable rather than penetrating.

In the translation used by Benderson and Preciado, 'minutieux' is translated by Alan Sheridan as 'meticulous', which expresses the detailed formation of power, and its characterisation as 'mobile and localisable' in Foucault's conception (Kendall 1998, p. 51). Foucault has also described power through microphysics, similarly implying its mobility and possible concentration (1998). But through his description of the pill, Preciado describes the *miniaturisation* of power, as well as its portability. This miniaturisation follows Donna Haraway: 'Miniaturization has turned out to be about power; small is not so much beautiful as pre-eminently dangerous, as in cruise missiles' (2013, p. 106). The pill represents the advent of miniature, camouflaged, chemical power.

However, the pill itself is contrasted with the body of the penetrable sex worker, subject to interventions and divisions. The pill heralds the 'age of pharmacopornography', and the hormonal gels favoured by Preciado, whereas the sex worker represents the site of an earlier manifestation of Foucault's disciplinary power. Here, the pill exposes a clash of two different regimes of power. Preciado describes the pill through this division: he analyses the DialPak in relation to Foucault's disciplinary spatialisation, whereas the mouth, intertwined with the pill in Preciado's writing, is described in terms of pharmacopornographic complicity. The DialPak and the panopticon, as signifiers of the pill, infer that women taking the pill are *subjected* to chemical regulation: a consumer of the pill 'sees itself chemically modified', implying an absence of agency (p. 235).

In comparison, the mouth, another 'opening', space or hole associated with both pornography and the pill, is described in terms of complicity and pharmacopornographic resistance: 'We could give in to the temptation of representing this relationship according to a dialectical relationship of domination/oppression as if it were a unidirectional movement in which miniaturised liquid power from the outside infiltrates the obedient body of

individuals. But no' (p. 208). Instead, Preciado concludes: 'It is not power infiltrating from the outside, it is the body desiring power, seeking to swallow it, eat it, administer it, wolf it down, more always more, through every hole, by every possible route of application. Turning oneself into power' (p. 208). Similarly, he writes that the 'dominant manifestations of the pharmacopornographic age' are 'pills, prostheses, food, images, fellatio and double penetration'; these manifestations 'share the same relationship between the body and power: a desire for infiltration, absorption, total occupation' (p. 207). Equally bipower 'dwells at home, sleeps with us, inhabits within' (p. 208); here, Preciado is perhaps referencing Foucault's comment that 'La prison débute bien avant ses portes. Dès que tu sors de chez toi' (*Dits et écrits* 1994, p. 194). In contrast to the DialPak, which prescribes and regulates power, the mouth imbibes power through the pill, and is capable of turning 'oneself into power' (p. 208).

Unlike previous descriptions of the panopticon and the DialPak, in which the body appears bound by chemical regulation, here, the mouth is hungry for the pill, and its corresponding power. Shaviro has written that 'everything enters through a gash, a slit, an open sore: the mouth, the eyes, the asshole, the cunt' (1997, p. 81). In comparison with Testogel (the testosterone gel applied by Preciado), spreading through the skin into the blood, the pill is swallowed, and enters through one of the designated pharmacopornographic holes, perhaps limiting its potential for radical re-appropriation. For Shaviro, the skin and the mouth are equally 'open' points of entry; for Preciado, skin is pharmacopornographic, and, through the pill, mouths are aligned with both disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power. Ultimately, Preciado's sex worker is desirous of power and bodily alienated, observing chemically induced rhythms, and straddling the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes.

Furthermore, the sex worker is embodied performativity: Preciado writes that the monthly bleed experienced by women on the pill is performative, 'mimicking the normal physiological cycle', the pill 'forces us to extend Butler's conception of performativity from theatrical imitation and linguistic performative force to living mimicry, the technical imitation of the very materiality of the living being' (p. 191). The pill induces the performative, pharmacopornographic 'production of somatic fictions of femininity and masculinity'; a process he terms 'biodrag' (p. 191). However, Preciado leapfrogs over some salient facts in the process of developing this form of 'biodrag'. He writes that the FDA's scientific committee felt that the initial pill 'threw doubt on the femininity of American women by suppressing their periods altogether', which led to the production of a second

pill, which, unlike the first, could ‘technologically reproduce the rhythms of a natural menstrual cycle, inducing bleeding that created the illusion of a natural cycle’s taking place and somehow “mimicking the normal physiological cycle”’ (p. 190).

But Preciado provides no evidence in support of his claim that the FDA rejected the first pill on the basis that it ‘threw doubt on the femininity of American women’ (p. 190). He references a paper by Anna Glasier that simply indicates how the mimicking of period bleeding intended to ‘improve bleeding patterns and safety’ (Glasier, 2002). Furthermore, contemporaneous news sources imply that the FDA consciously avoided (at least the appearance of) rejecting the pill on the basis of morality or femininity. The FDA’s Associate Commissioner John L. Harvey, on announcing that the pill had been approved, assured the public that ‘(Our) own ideas of morality had nothing to do with the case’ (Carpenter 2010, p. 187). Harvey firmly claimed that ‘approval was based on the question of safety’ (p. 187). In fact, the pill’s ‘performative’ bleed appears to be related to the work of the ‘devoutly Catholic’ Dr John Rock, who first manufactured the compound (Gladwell, 2009). For Rock, withdrawal bleeding was ‘a matter of marketing and politics’ (2009). He believed that women would find monthly bleeding ‘normal’ and reassuring, and he wanted to assure Catholics that the pill was ‘no more than a natural variant of the rhythm method’: ‘rhythm required regularity, so the pill had to produce that as well’ (2009). Notably, the pill’s association with Catholicism and the rhythm method entrenched its affinity with sex.

Rock’s equation of the pill with the ‘natural’ rhythm method extends Preciado’s conception of ‘biodrag’, as well as the compound’s performativity: the pill not only performed femininity, it mimicked the rhythm method, ‘performing’ religiously accepted, ‘natural’ means of contraception. Preciado configures the pill’s monthly bleed as a federally mandated performance of femininity, but, as Tina Kelley writes in an article on contraception for *The New York Times*: ‘There is just one reason women who take the pill bleed at the end of their cycle. Dr. John Rock, an inventor of the pill, wanted to make it easier for the Roman Catholic Church to accept’ (2003). Preciado emphasises the pill’s ‘technological reproducibility’, but this effective and reliable contraceptive device ironically technologically enshrined in its processes both a famously untrustworthy means of contraception, and periodic abstinence (p. 266). Preciado writes that the pharmaceutical industry asserts power through transforming perceptions of heterosexuality, femininity, masculinity, homosexuality and the libido into ‘tangible realities’: ‘depression into Prozac [...] our erection into Viagra, our fertility/sterility into the Pill’ (2013, p. 34). Here, it must be acknowledged that the pill is a specifically Catholic assertion of ‘tangible power’: the pill

not only performs ‘somatic fictions’ of masculinity and femininity, but somatic fictions of religious embodiment.

Preciado’s narrative opposes the federal government with G. D. Searle and Company, ostensibly establishing an opposition between disciplinary regulation and pharmacopornographic control. But John Rock’s contribution to the pill destabilises his interpretation. Accordingly, the pharmacopornographic fails to displace the disciplinary, both regimes appear to co-exist, simultaneously exerting somatic power and constructing somatic fictions, in a continual process of displacement and replacement, or what Preciado terms a ‘living flow of capital’ (p. 266). As Preciado notes, later in the book: ‘the gender barriers will not fall easily’, pharmacopornographic capitalism inevitably ‘clashes with the boundaries of the gender binary epistemology, which continue to function according to models of femininity and masculinity inherited from the nineteenth century sexopolitical regime that established a strict continuity between sex, sexuality and reproduction’ (p. 223). But these narratives co-occur and coincide, as well as ‘clash’. The pill’s storied, technological, pharmacological past involves a Catholic design based on a ‘strict continuity’ between sex, sexuality and reproduction, which was unlikely to be federally mandated (p. 223). Rather than embodying the clash of disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes, as Preciado posits, the pill appears to epitomise their cooperation.

Thus, the sex worker is produced through somatic fictions of femininity, masculinity and religiosity: she is both subject to the enforcement of strict, gender binaries and the continuity of sex with reproduction, and obliged to chemically self-modify at the whim of pharmaceutical companies. Thus, again, Preciado’s sex worker is devoid of agency, designed to be a globally reproducible subject: ‘the pharmacopornographic business is the *invention of a subject* and then its global reproduction’ (p. 36). The only agency Preciado grants the consumer of the pill is the possibility for ‘accident’ built into self-regulating systems: ‘it takes it into account, programs it’ (p. 208). Consequently, according to Preciado, the pill’s possibility for failure represents its potential for agency: ‘the fact that the pill must be managed at home, by the individual user, in an autonomous way’ (p. 208). In comparison with Testogel, Preciado fails to expand on the potentially subversive ways in which the pill can be taken, and whether he refers here to irregular dosages or unregulated gender transitioning. Preciado urges cis-women to take testosterone and enjoy the benefits of the political ‘surplus value’ of masculinity, but never encourages cis-men to experiment with the contraceptive pill (p. 268). Crucially, as Anne Pasek writes, ‘Preciado is drawn towards the position of hegemonic masculinity on a visual and hormonal level’: the pill is broadly

described in terms of slavery, colonialism and coercion, while Testogel epitomises increased strength, aggression and sexual energy (Pasek, 2015). But, ultimately, both can be described in terms of architecture, wherein the purpose is not representation or habitat: ‘like true performative devices, they tend to produce the subject they claim to shelter’; they are ‘technologies of subjectification’ (p. 205). Comparable to Playboy’s architectonic embodiment, the pill and pornography *produce* the sex worker.

### *L’entrepreneur du soi/Le dividuel*

The sex worker is produced through the pill; but, in Preciado’s analysis, the pill is also indistinguishable from the sex worker. The pill mimics the body’s physiological cycles, and its techno self-regulating processes become inseparable from bio bodily functions. Equally, biodrag is not defined by a process of exchange, between the pill and the body, rather they both form a productive, technological whole. Preciado’s conception of the pill-taking sex worker closely resembles Foucault’s *entrepreneur du soi*: ‘L’Homo economicus est un entrepreneur pour lui-même, il est à lui-même son propre capital, son propre producteur, son propre consommateur, sa propre source de revenue’ (2004, p. 232). Foucault argues that capitalism demands homo economicus become an *entrepreneur du soi*, rather than part of a process of exchange involving multiple partners. Instead, the *entrepreneur du soi* effects subjectification through internal collaboration: the sex worker is simultaneously, in relation to both the pill and pornography, a producer, a consumer, and a source of capital and revenue. An *entrepreneur du soi* consumes the pill, or pornography, produces a subject: the sex worker, and plugs into Preciado’s rhythm of excitation-frustration-capital, which centres on the repetition of frustration, thus the endless ‘living flow of capital’ (p. 266). This Foucauldian, entrepreneurial figure is, as Andrew Dilts describes it, an ‘enabling subjectivity’ (2011, p. 131).

Foucault also writes that the *entrepreneur du soi* enables a reconfiguration of governmental control as environmental, rather than: ‘l’assujettissement interne des individus’ (p. 232). According to Foucault, contemporary capitalist subjectivity is defined by manageability: entrepreneurs automatically respond to modifications in their environments, and require minimal individual management. Consequently, Foucault writes that this entrepreneur is simultaneously a self-regulating consumer and a producer: ‘Il produit tout simplement sa propre satisfaction’ (p. 232). Similarly, as cited above, Federici has written of diffused power: ‘the individual would function at once as both master and slave’; or as

Preciado describes the pornographic imperative, ‘fuck you yourself’ (2004, p. 150; 2013, p. 165). ‘Fuck you yourself’ encompasses the acts of both consuming and producing, and, implies the self-regulation inherent in performing the roles of both master and slave (p. 165).

Equally, according to Preciado, both pornography and the pill rely on self-regulation, self-discipline, and subjectification – as a sex worker, a role defined by manageability, accessibility and modifiability. In reference to the pill, Preciado writes of ‘hormonal modification’, ‘technologies of the modification of subjectivity’, and ‘structural modifications generated by micropolitical changes’, like drug consumption (pp. 173; 389; 142). Equally, Preciado ‘defines the principles of [...] pharmacopornographic knowledge’, through performing both femininity and pornographic tropes in his sexual relationship: ‘she induces me to produce a form of femininity I’ve never allowed myself’; ‘she made me come as if I were a schoolgirl’, ‘I’m a nymphomaniac’, ‘her slave’ (p. 318). Through his sexual performance, he writes that he abandons his ‘insatiable instinct to penetrate’ in favour of ‘transform(ing)’ his body into ‘a hole that’s always open, at her disposal. *Gloriam penetrationis*’ (p. 318). Both the pill and pornographic performances are defined by accessibility and modifiability, and the management of subjectification. Crucially, both the pill and pornography produce female subjects – the sex worker is distinctly gendered.

Foucault writes that the *entrepreneur du soi* is defined by manageability, but perhaps fails to account for the capitalist growth imperative: his entrepreneur is self-contained, regulated, and allows for environmental control, but not for endless subject reproducibility. Foucault’s entrepreneur accepts his modifiable, marketable self. He can also resist its shape (a programmed possibility), but abandoning the system entirely would require a shift in his conception of self. Thus, according to Foucault, producing an *entrepreneur du soi* entails the intertwining of selfhood with capitalism. This conception of self is necessarily stable, if susceptible to modifications: he produces ‘sa propre satisfaction’, but its focus is not replicability (p. 232). In comparison, Preciado emphasises that pharmacopornography’s aim is the ‘invention of a subject’, but also its ‘global reproduction’ (p. 36). These subjects are galvanised by pharmacopornographic desires and become reproducible ‘toxic-pornographic subjectivities’: ‘cocaine subjects’, ‘alcohol subjects’, ‘Ritalin subjects’ – defined by a repetitive relationship with a substance (p. 35).

Deleuze’s theorisation of the *dividuel* emphasises the significance of reproducibility: in his ‘Post-scriptum sur les sociétés de contrôle’, he writes: ‘Les individus sont devenus des *dividuels*’, in relation to data representation; similarly, ‘les masses, des échantillons, des données, des marchés ou des *banques*’ (1990). In comparison with Foucault’s

*entrepreneur*, the *dividuel* is not individuated internally, but through networks of affects. But the *dividuel* is defined through mimetic reproducibility and a mode of subjectification predicated on constant, endless divisibility, rather than a stable conception of self. The individual is whole; in comparison, the *dividuel* is vulnerable to division and proliferation. Preciado's analysis of pharmacopornographic subjectivity through pornography and the pill produces a sex worker capable of acting as both master and slave, consumer and producer. The sex worker is an ostensibly vulnerable character, but subject to *segmentability* rather than divisibility – thus appears invulnerable.

As described above, microporn depicts the segmentation of bodies: encountering the body in pieces affirms its invulnerability, each separate part is capable of functioning individually, and collectively, they index a complete body. Microporn's pure, inexhaustible repetition encodes invulnerability, passing through vulnerability. Preciado writes of 'multiple somato-political models' composing and implementing subjectivity through segmentability: he notes that rhinoplasty is considered plastic surgery, whereas vaginoplasty and phalloplasty are considered sex change operations (p. 115). Accordingly, he concludes that the nose is regulated by pharmacopornographic power: 'in which an organ is considered to be private property', in comparison with, 'the genitals [...] still imprisoned in a premodern, sovereign [...] power regime that considers them to be the property of the state' (p. 116). Similarly, the body of the sex worker is segmented rather than divisible. Preciado describes the sex worker in terms of holes: the mouth plays the role of the 'master' – admitting food, pills and body parts; the 'hole that's always open' plays the 'slave'; and the eyes, engaged in perpetual self-observation, perform the role of the body's watchtower (p. 318). The body resembles a DialPak, which in turn resembles the panopticon: each segment a separate cell, forming a whole, a subject produced through processes of opening and ingesting. The sex worker is simultaneously vulnerable and invulnerable: vulnerable to segmentation, but invulnerable to divisibility – her body parts always index a whole, and a hole.

Examined in a previous chapter, in 'Rethinking vulnerability and resistance', Butler writes of the importance of theorizing the body through its dependence: on infrastructure, the environment, and social relations (2014). Butler argues that we should 'foreground the ways in which we are vulnerable', not only to one another, but in a wider, societal sense (2014). Exposing ourselves as vulnerable is not about 'shoring up paternalistic power', but rejecting a purely 'agentic' perspective of political resistance (2014). Butler writes that we oppose vulnerability and prefer to view ourselves as agents, but we are 'invariably acted

upon' as well as acting: 'If nothing acts on me against my will or without my advanced knowledge, then there is only sovereignty, the posture of control over the property that I have and that I am, a seemingly sturdy and self-centered form of the thinking "I" that seeks to cloak those faultlines in the self that cannot be overcome' (2014). Butler concludes: 'What form of politics is supported by this adamant mode of disavowal?' (2014) Significantly, Butler writes that we must understand vulnerability in collective terms: as a 'relation to a field of objects, forces and passions' that affect us in different ways, rather than a '*subjective disposition*' (my italics).

Here, Butler opposes vulnerability to the fantasy of an impervious, sovereign, masculine 'I': separate, invulnerable and impenetrable. Butler implies that a politics supported by this sovereign 'I' ignores our collective vulnerability and entrenches paternalistic power. But vulnerability is also the exposure of a single, identifiable, localized self to its finitude: an admission of vulnerability is also the admission of a finitude it is incapable of mastering – the finitude of the self. Moya Lloyd notes the critical consensus regarding Butler's emphasis on finitude and vulnerability: George Shulman writes that Butler's ethics are 'oriented by a finitude that binds us to (the suffering and mortality) of others' (2015).' Ann Murphy describes Butler's body as 'an entity that is – above all else – vulnerable to injury and suffering' (Lloyd, 2015). Bonnie Honig describes Butler as a 'mortalist humanist', noting that Butler privileges the 'ontological fact of mortality' and 'vulnerability to suffering' (Lloyd, 2015). Both *Frames of War* and *Precarious Life* are concerned with vulnerability in relation to precarity and finitude. Butler seeks to destabilize the 'seemingly sturdy and self-centered' 'I', the 'self that cannot be overcome' (2014). But, for Butler, vulnerability is always bound up with a self, however exposed: 'I am vulnerable and exposed', is an acknowledgement of consistent selfhood, however dependent (2014).

In Preciado's writing on the pill and pornography, the sex worker epitomizes pharmacoporn power's dependent 'wholeness', producing a hole/whole binary. Lacan has written that women are defined by a lack of signifier: the phallus. He adds that women's sexual organs have no symbolic signifier because they are hidden, thus characterized by absence, a void, or a hole. His provocative 'la femme n'existe pas' expresses the absence of a penis, thus the absence of a signifier (1990, p. 60). Laura Mulvey writes of psychoanalytic theory: '(Women) can only exist in relation to castration and cannot transcend it. She turns her child into the signifier of her own desire to possess a penis (the condition, she imagines, of entry into the symbolic)' (1988, p. 58). The 'woman-as-hole' persists in literature and theory: from Sade, to Desclos's *Histoire 'O* (1954). Angela Carter writes that Sade leaves a

hole in his text ‘large enough for women to see themselves [...] a spyhole into territory that had been forbidden them’ (1992 p. 36). Here, Carter writes how Sade, through constructing women as ‘holes’, exposed culturally constructed subjectification. Perhaps similarly, Preciado relies on pornographic sexual essentialism in order to expose the ‘hole’, not as lack, but presence, of (self-constructed) pharmacopornographic subjectivity.

For example, Preciado writes of sex with his partner: ‘the power of digging a hole in her body’: here ‘digging’ a hole is as a creative process of moulding (p. 332). He also configures new holes: his tongue becomes an ‘erectile muscle’ and he writes of his partner, ‘her mouth fucks my tongue, mounting it and descending rapidly. She has found my erection’ (pp. 95; 88). Preciado writes that a partner discusses dildos while ‘sticking (your) tongue into the hole of one of my nostrils’ (p. 419). Ultimately, Preciado’s pharmacopornographic body represents holes as openings to power: ‘the body desiring power, seeking to swallow it, eat it, administer it, wolf it down, more and always more, through every hole, by every possible route of application’ (p. 208). His focus on sex work and pharmacopornographic holes represents an exhortation, or an instruction: construct your own somatic fictions. In contrast to Sade’s ‘peephole’ into culturally structured femininity, Preciado advocates ‘fuck you yourself’: swallowing power involves reaching inside yourself, turning yourself inside out – and emerging as your own signifier. Here, the whole becomes a hole, filled with pharmacopornographic power (p. 265).

My analysis of the sex worker through the pill and pornography has explored pharmacopornographic subjectivity, and how it functions through conceptions of a coherent ‘whole’, and an experiential mode of the self – in Butler’s theorization. In a recent study of Butler’s work, Terrell Carver writes that ‘there is a renewed sense of the efficacy of experience [...] the experience of becoming undone – of vulnerability, dependence and ‘unravelling’ – that can change one’s sense of self’ (2008, p.26). In comparison, Preciado adheres to ‘modulation’ theory, from Simondon and Deleuze: individuation co-exists with the individual and ‘becoming is seen as a dimension of being’, in comparison with producing and displacing the effects of ‘unravelling’ onto the body (2017, p.18). ‘Modulation’ is continuous, and inseparable from selfhood.

For Butler, subjectivity is stable, correspondingly, resistance involves an intentional process of ‘unravelling’ and exposure – of vulnerability (p. 26). For Preciado, ‘casting and uncasting’ defines contemporary pharmacopornographic subjectivity, rather than resistance (2014, p.134). Carver’s assertion of agentic ‘unraveling’ and ‘becoming undone’ implies body plasticity – decisively moulding rather than flexibly being moulded – like clay,

following Malabou. But Simondon writes that clay poured into a mold is metastable rather than passive. Ronald Bogue describes Simondon's conception: the clay is 'in active communication with the surfaces of the mold', a 'process of information exchange' characterizes the process (2014, p. 134). Continuous 'casting and uncasting' define a process perceived to be 'flexible' rather than 'plastic' (p. 134). Equally, for Preciado, the continuous processes of subjectivation and modulation inherent in pharmacopornography (which relies on subject production) allow for agency in the perpetual exchange of 'casting and uncasting' (p. 134).

Thus, the 'sex worker' is 'whole', if segmented and vulnerable, but is subject to 'casting and uncasting' (2014, p. 134). This process relates to Preciado's 'boomerang', examined above: pornographic excitation is 'structured by the boomerang' of subjectification and de-subjectification, and pleasure in the process of being reduced to *potentia gaudendi*. As Preciado notes in *Pornotopia*, in relation to *Playboy*: 'pleasure is generated from the constant move from one extreme to another'; 'this is the 'play' that gives the magazine its name' (p. 48): from private to public, from dressed to undressed, from master to slave, or possessor of power and agency to embodied *potentia gaudendi*. Ultimately, this pleasure-producing 'play' is the production of exposure and vulnerability, but, more crucially, division. In comparison with Butler's phenomenological, experiential 'I', Preciado identifies a potential series of selves, which are produced and undone at different moments, according to the pornographic gaze and the 'play' between binaries. Preciado notes the 'pleasure of multiplicity' as it relates to being 'in transit' (p. 133); he writes of a 'multiplicity of power-knowledge regimes', 'operating simultaneously on different organs, tearing the body apart' (p. 116). Preciado describes the body's *segmentability*, and, in response, advocates *multiplicity of subjectivity*, to counter the multiplicity of power-knowledge regimes: 'the crumbling of sexual identity into a multiplicity of desires, practices and aesthetics, the invention of new molecular sensibilities' (pp. 116; 83). Preciado describes the Butlerian mode of subjectification persisting in the sex worker, while advancing the multiplicity and possibility in the 'play' between desubjectification and subjectification. *Testo Junkie* presents the sex worker through Butler's conception of vulnerability, and her consistent 'I', indicating presence, but Preciado advocates divisive processes of subjectification. Again, here, Preciado's 'boomerang' involves the sex worker producing pleasure – 'casting and uncasting', moving from public to private, dressed to undressed: sex work produces friction and pleasure. The 'pleasure of

multiplicity' identified by Preciado, and being 'in transit' is permitted the 'hetero-macho' consumer, rather than the sex worker (p. 133).

This division between segmentability and multiplicity reflects the historical presentation of women through 'wholeness'. In a discussion of feminism and bioscience, Janet Price writes of the value of science in relation to understanding embodiment, but she also notes: 'there exists a distrust of a set of ideas and practices that have seemed to function both historically and contemporaneously to devalue, damage and exclude women as figures of dense, unspeaking, gross corporeality' (2005, p. 353). For example, the Enlightenment privileged the masculinised mind, in comparison with the grossly material, irrational body defined as feminine.<sup>8</sup> Simone de Beauvoir writes that the default human is masculine, because women are thick with burdensome organs. At the beginning of *Le Deuxième Sexe*, Beauvoir reminds us: 'La femme a des ovaires, un utérus; voilà des conditions singulières qui l'enferment dans sa subjectivité; on dit volontiers qu'elle pense avec ses glandes' (1950, p. 14). Beauvoir acerbically adds: 'L'homme oublie superbement que son anatomie comporte aussi des hormones, des testicules.' (p. 14) She writes that men apprehend the world objectively, unencumbered by their bodies, in comparison with women – weighed down by imprisoning ovaries.

In response to this perception of weighty wholeness, feminist theorists write of a reactive process of bodily division: Cixous writes that women are wholes composed of parts; Irigaray writes that women break themselves up into pieces, and cut themselves in two (1989, p. 144). Sylvia Plath writes of bodies in pieces: in 'Daddy', after a suicide attempt, 'they pulled me out of the sack, and they stuck me together with glue' (1965). In 'Lady Lazarus', Plath writes of a segmented body, 'the nose, the eye pits, the full set of teeth', in pieces, but somehow indexing a whole: she writes with surprise, 'And I a smiling woman [...] I am the same identical woman', both comprised of and defined by body parts (1965). Equally, the sex worker's subjectivity is defined by organs and segmentability. However, Preciado emphasises construction: segmentability implies construction, which implies agency – however limited. Preciado writes of the construction and deconstruction of subjectivity, the 'repetition of processes of political construction', even 'penises and vaginas are biocodes of power knowledges regimes' – implying the possibility of decoding (pp. 69; 395). He writes of social, cultural, discursive, cybernetic, somato-political and surgical construction as continuous. Perhaps, here, slippage from segmentability to multiplicity is

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<sup>8</sup> See *Women, Gender and the Enlightenment*, B. Taylor, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

discernible. Instead of a segmented bio-body indexing a whole, Preciado advocates inventing and constructing different techno-bodies – through a ‘crumbling’ of identity, or desubjectification (p. 83). Although Preciado provides scant detail on how sex workers can access agency through sex work or the pill, *Testo Junkie* does, again, represent ‘working on and against’, in Muñoz’s formulation (1999, pp. 46-47). Preciado works *on* the landscape of sex work subjectification, rather than denying its entrenchment, and *against* the segmentability of women’s bodies – advocating multiplicity, and the acknowledgment of both bio and techno body construction.

### *Le gode*

In comparison with pornography and pill narratives, and representing another kind of ‘sex work’, Preciado presents the reader with what he describes in *Manifeste contrasexuel* as ‘dildotechtonics’ (2000). As Nick Rees-Roberts writes: ‘Preciado argues that the dildo is not an imitation of the penis, not an object whose referent is the real thing, but a displacement of the perceived organic centre of sex’ (2014, p. 138). Dildotechtonics, according to Rees-Roberts, is ironically conceived, eschews ‘Lacanian kitsch’ and aims to replace it with ‘synthetic sex’ (p. 138). In Preciado’s theoretical chapters, pornography and the pill produce sex workers devoid of agency; in comparison, his narrative chapters, and descriptions of sex with his partner, are concerned with the power of trans and lesbian bodies.

In *Manifeste contrasexuel*, Preciado writes (translated by Sam Bourcier): ‘Pour démasquer la sexualité comme idéologie, il faut comprendre le gode (sa coupure d’avec le corps) comme centre de signification différée. Le gode n’est pas un objet qui viendrait se substituer à un manque’ (2000, p. 66). Rather, ‘n’importe quoi peut devenir gode. Tout est gode. Même le pénis’ (p. 66). Here, Preciado dispenses with the narrative centrality of the penis, and following Haraway, demonstrates how the technologically enhanced body is capable of synthesizing the biological and the prosthetic. Preciado treats the dildo as a technological successor of the hand, rather than an imitation of a penis, through outlining the history of equally moveable instruments like machines designed to treat hysteria, and anti-masturbation devices. His manifesto also presents the reader with an alternative ‘opening’, which he claims as the centre of deconstructive contra-sexual work: ‘l’anus est un centre érogène universel situé au—delà des limites anatomiques imposées par la différence sexuelle’ (2000, p. 28). He adds: ‘l’anus est une zone de passivité-primordiale, un centre de production d’excitation et de plaisir qui ne figure pas sur la liste des points

orgastiques prescrit' (p. 28). Unlike the mouth or the vagina, designated pharmacopornographic openings, 'l'anus [...] ne figure pas sur las liste des points orgastiques prescrit' (2000, p. 28). Preciado's narrative chapters in *Testo Junkie* produce counter-sex with dildos in counter-pharmacopornographic body parts: he writes of 'postpornographic pleasure' in his 'low-tech transgender identity composed of dildos' (p. 16).

The text opens with Preciado sticking his hairs above his lip to form a moustache, taking his first dose of testosterone, and filming himself inserting two dildos: 'I slide the dildos into the openings at the lower part of my body [...] On my knees, I turn my back to the camera, the tips of my feet and my head pressing against the floor, and hold my arms behind me so that they can manage the two dildos in my orifices' (p. 19). The dildos represent his status as penetrable-penetrating, as both 'fucked' and 'fucking' – epitomizing 'fuck you yourself' (p. 265). In another chapter, the dildo is a tool of casual sex, hanging on the bathroom wall like a diaphragm or a sex toy: 'when I get up the next morning she's already gone. I unfasten the dildo from the bathroom wall, get dressed, and leave the hotel' (p. 90) He describes both himself and his partner as a 'whore': 'I put on a harness with an 8½ inch x 1½ inch dildo. Then I come back to fuck her. And I do—for an amorphous period of time that is neither long nor short, until we both come, me first and then she, my whore' (p. 89). Then, however, subverting expectations beginning with 'I come back to fuck her', 'she falls asleep' (p. 89). Preciado moves his arm, 'feeling entirely helpless'; he gets up, washes his dildo, finds it difficult to sleep, and when he wakes up, his partner has left: 'I'm the one who's the whore, something I knew' (p. 90). The dildo is capable of configuring Preciado as both the man who writes, 'She's ready to come. I get up and leave her like that, like a dismembered animal. I'm thinking of leaving now, to up my masculinity quotient', and the restless, 'entirely helpless' lover, washing his dildo in the bathroom, unable to sleep, fondly watching his partner sleeping (p. 89). Here, the dildo subverts pornographic and gender tropes and introduces ambiguity: when he writes 'the only way I can have an orgasm is with a dildo', the reader is unsure whether he means as a penetrable or penetrating body – an important distinction in Preciado's formulation of the sex worker (p. 90). In another scene, Preciado writes: 'being taken by your own dildo-harness: an act of extreme humiliation, relinquishing all forms of my hormonal, prosthetic or cultural virility' (p. 318). In another, he writes of the continuity of body parts with bodily openings: 'I don't write a line without getting hard for her, without thinking that in one moment or other, my sex, my

dick, my dildo, my hand, my arm will be able to have something to do with her mouth' (p. 61). The mouth, hand, arm and dildo are all continuously capable of penetrating.

Thus, the sex worker with the dildo is equipped with a tool of gender, body and sexual subversion, in contrast with the pill and pornography; the dildo, according to Preciado, is 'post-pornographic' (p. 231). But Preciado has written that the 'pharmacopornographic business' is the 'invention of a subject and its global reproduction': 'in biotechnology and in porncommunication there is no object to be produced' (p. 36). Furthermore, Preciado's focus on divisibility in opposition to segmentability is complicated by the narrative centrality of the dildo in *Testo Junkie*. Preciado's dildos align more closely with Butler's stable 'I' than a shifting subject of subjectification and de-subjectification. Used by Preciado as a means of self-representation, the dildo symbolizes his status as trans, masculine and agentic. In comparison with intangible, slippery Testogel, the dildo appears incongruously present and visible: tied to an economy of representation, it has a distinct purpose.

In 'On Narcissism', Freud writes of 'erotogenicity': the capacity of any body part to become sexually excited: 'We can decide to regard erotogenicity as a general characteristic of all organs and may then speak of an increase or decrease of it in a particular part of the body' (1914, p. 84). In comparison, Butler writes that in *The Ego and the Id*, he rejects this interpretation of erotogenicity in favour of asserting the primacy of the male genitals: 'certain other areas of the body – the erotogenetic zones – may act as substitutes' (2015, p. 60). In *Three Essays on Sexuality*, Freud similarly advances the penis as the referent for erotogenicity: erogenous areas 'behave exactly like the genitals' (1905). Butler finds this movement from erotogenicity as 'a property defined by its very plasticity, transferability and expropriability' to the eventual focus on the penis to be ultimately disappointing: she writes that Freud, in *The Ego and the Id* and other later work, appears to be 'foundering amid a set of constitutive ambivalences out of his control' (2015, p. 61). In order to suppress this 'metonymic slide', the 'phallus is then set up as that which confers erotogenicity and signification on these body parts [...] the phallus is installed as an origin precisely to suppress the ambivalence produced in the course of that slide' (p. 61). Thus, the penis is used to halt troublingly ambivalent sexuality; in comparison, Preciado's dildos are signifiers of productive 'foundering', ambivalence and the 'slide' into prosthetic, technological sexuality (p. 60). Ultimately, both early Freud and Butler express the potentially plastic nature of the body's erotogenicity; Preciado extends this plasticity to the prosthetically, literally plastic.

In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado criticises the desexualisation of biopolitical philosophy: ‘none of them mention the effects on their philosopher’s cocks of a dose of Viagra accompanied by the right image [...] the crux of work has become sexual, spermatic, masturbatory’ (p. 293). Equally, Butler writes that her discourse on the lesbian phallus will be ‘more interesting than satisfying’ (2015, p. 57). In contrast, Preciado’s descriptions of pharmacopornography are interspersed with orgasms. While the dildo has an affinity with an economy of representation, its status as a pharmacopornographic ‘object’ is problematized in Preciado’s writing. Preciado writes that pharmacopornographic biocapitalism ‘does not produce things. It produces mobile ideas, living organs, symbols, desires, chemical reactions’ (p. 36). Accordingly, the dildo is not a ‘thing’, it has a bio-prosthetic status in *Testo Junkie*: it can be ‘super erect’ and an extension of his ‘bio’ body: ‘my nerve endings innervating my dildo all the way to the end’ (p. 18). He writes that the dildo is a ‘synthetic extension of sex to produce pleasure and identity’: as opposed to an ‘object’, a ‘thing’, or a phallic signifier, the dildo is performative, produces identities, shapes sexual and gender subjectification, and, crucially, the dildo is moveable – configuring the body as endlessly plastic, and limitlessly sexual (p. 35).

But, however satirical Preciado’s contrasexual, dildo philosophy, the dildo inevitably signifies the economy of penetration which he aligns with disciplinary regimes (the pill, pornography, penetrable bodies). Preciado’s theorisation of sex workers through a division between penetrable and penetrating in pornography re-inscribes gender binaries and revives the sex and porn wars. Equally, despite the dildo’s function in *Testo Junkie* as a counter-sexual tool, it similarly re-inscribes historical feminist dildo debates. Heather Findlay writes that ‘no other sex toy has generated the quantity or quality of discussion among mostly urban, middle-class, white lesbians than the dildo’ (1999, p. 466). The dildo is baffling to some lesbians: ‘We can’t figure out how this could be erotic to a woman identified-woman. If they want a dick, why are they with a woman wearing a dildo and not a man? Don’t misunderstand us; we’re heavily into penetration ... but this whole life-like dildo market is baffling to us’ (1999, p. 467). In comparison, lesbian sexologist Susie Bright writes that a dildo can be anything: ‘a succulent squash, or a tender mold of silicon. Technically, it is any device you use for the pleasure of vaginal or anal penetration [...] Penises can only be compared to dildos in the sense that they take up space’ (p. 467). Here, dildos are a moveable tool defined by their function, rather than a penis referent.

A common distinction is: dildo as moveable, flexible, imaginary device, in comparison with dildo as intrusive-presence-of-penis. Either way, good dildos are moveable

and flexible; bad dildos are solid and penis-signifiers. But, perhaps, through Lacan, Preciado's phallogocentric metaphysics of presence is redeemable. Elizabeth Grosz writes that in Lacan, the phallus 'functions to enable the penis to define all (socially recognised) forms of human sexuality' (1990, p. 117). The penis is produced as an 'object of signification rather than a biological organ' – it symbolises 'what some 'possess' and others have lost, becoming the term through which the child comes to recognise sexual difference' (p. 118). The penis becomes a 'detachable organ' in the 'identificatory blurring of self and other' (p. 118). But crucially: 'it becomes a signifier within a signifying system, and thus cannot be possessed or owned by anyone' (p. 118). Here, the bio-cock is imaginary, in comparison with the sturdy dildo. The lamentable poverty of the evanescent bio-cock is contrasted with the robust techno-cock/dildo – which, most significantly, can be produced, owned and used by anyone – whether trans men, lesbians, or heterosexual couples. Through Lacan and Grosz, the penis signifies lack; in comparison, the dildo, traditionally the penis-signifier, represents presence and resistant power. In comparison with slippery, permeable Testogel, dildos are solid – perhaps representative of the persistence of disciplinary power juxtaposed with emergent pharmacopornographic power. Dildos are also more accessible than Testogel for cis and trans women – although, again aligning women with disciplinary rather than pharmacopornographic power. Testogel and dildos represent bodies as both networked skin, and solid and dense – indicating the body's combined permeability and penetrability.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude: Preciado's sex worker can be defined through '*Gloriam penetrationis*': in Preciado's conception, the pill and pornography denude her of agency and designate her as both a pharmacopornographic 'hole' and 'whole' (p. 318). She is a 'port of insertion', 'both the terminal of one of the apparatuses of neoliberal governmentality and the vanishing point through which escapes the system's power to control' (p. 302). But *Testo Junkie* fails to establish how she can access or activate this 'vanishing point' (p. 302). The pill and pornography carve out the limits of her body and pronounce her a productive apparatus. The dildo, ironically, considering its materiality and traditional signification, is a possible 'vanishing point' (p. 302). Here, Preciado describes both the creative and complicit performative power of prosthetic and chemical subjectification. The sex worker is embodied vulnerability and invulnerability: Preciado alternately presents her vulnerability in Butlerian, experiential terms and in relation to the divisible *dividuel*. The sex worker is

bodily segmented: eyes, mouth, genitals, always indexing a whole body – specifically, the reproducible pharmacopornographic body. Preciado’s injection of the dildo deconstructs the body of Butler’s vulnerable ‘I’, classifying it as plastic, moveable and sexual.

Significantly, the sex worker is segmented, rather than multiple or divisible: for Preciado, the sex worker is a stable subject. Preciado writes of the necessity of examining our assumed ‘stable foundations of our identity (sex, gender, and sexuality)’ in order to ‘see them as the opaque effects of cultural and political constructions, and consequently, as potential objects for a process of intentional, critical, and insubordinate intervention’ (p. 366). Examination becomes destabilisation, and this destabilisation is capable of provoking a ‘subjective shift’ described by Teresa de Lauretis and Muñoz as ‘disidentification’ – a shift in which we become aware of our ‘cultural orthopaedics’ (p. 366). When Preciado writes of retired sex workers taking testosterone, becoming trans men and extending their porn careers, he describes this process of awareness of ‘cultural orthopaedics’, followed by a ‘subjective shift’ or ‘disidentification’ (p. 366). Here, this imagined shift is Preciado’s bodily, ‘intentional’, critical’ and ‘subordinate’ ‘intervention’ in pornpower (p. 366). The stability of the sex worker also enables its reproduction – subject reproduction representing a central function of pharmacopornography. In comparison, the following chapter examines ‘biodrag’: *Testo Junkie*’s intervention/disidentification project using testosterone and drag. Mandy Merck writes that drag ‘fascinates in its simultaneous display of contradictory sexual meanings, not in resolution or dispersal’, or through transcending gender binaries and boundaries (2000, p. 49). Preciado presents this irresolvable quality in contrast to the sex worker’s stability and segmentability.

Ultimately, the sex worker gives visible and tangible form to the pornographic imperative, ‘fuck you yourself’: she is defined by self-discipline, self-regulation, straddling the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes (p. 265). She is both penetrable and penetrating: penetrated in sex work, and self-penetrating and regulating in ‘pill work’ – but lacking in agency in both expressions of power. Federici writes that when power is diffused into bodies, ‘the individual would function at once as both master and slave’: ‘fuck you yourself’ expresses the ‘you’re getting screwed’ dimension inherent in playing both master and slave, and describes awkwardness and frustration (p. 150). ‘Fuck you yourself’ never escapes the disciplinary regime while Preciado defines it exclusively through penetration. But perhaps most significantly, ‘fuck you yourself’ expresses the sex worker’s complicity with, or involvement in, the *work* of her own pharmacopornographic subjectification. Sex work is work, often wage labour – including, for example, pornographic sex work and

medical trials. Equally, subjectification is work. The following chapter presents another mode of subjectification: biodrag, a combination of drag and testosterone aligned more firmly with *Testo Junkie*'s pharmacopornographic regime.

## The Biodrag King

‘Do I belong more to your world than I do to the world of the living? Isn’t my politics yours; my house, my body, yours? [...] Reincarnate yourself in me; possess my tongue, arms, sex organs, dildos, blood, molecules; possess my girlfriend, dog; inhabit me, live in me. Come. *Ven*. Please don’t leave. *Vuelve a la vida*. Come back to life. Hold on to my sex. Low, down, dirty.

Stay with me’

(2013, p. 20).

Preciado’s testo-project aims to blend Butler’s work on performativity with Donna Haraway’s work on the body in order to ‘push the performative hypothesis further into the body, as far as its organs and fluids; drawing it into the cells, chromosomes, and genes’ (p. 110). Here, Preciado illustrates the potential permeability of Butler’s theory of performativity, describing its synthesis with the body. This chapter will examine this practice, which Preciado terms ‘biodrag’: queer politics are absorbed through the skin with his applications of testosterone (p. 191). Artaud described how the physicality of theatre was capable of sensitising audiences and penetrating through their skin. I propose that, through ‘biodrag’, queer politics is capable of bodily *permeation*.

For Preciado, drag represents both a practice of identification, and the troubling of identification. Jack Halberstam, in his book on female masculinity, notes that ‘identity, as a representational strategy produces both power and danger: it provides both an obstacle to identification and a site of necessary trouble’ (1998, p. 177). For Preciado, drag is both foundational to his identification with masculinity, and inevitably troubling – here meaning the practice of gender troubling, of muddying and disruption – because it displays its practical construction. Butler writes that ‘there isn’t an original or primary gender a drag imitates, but *gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original*’ (1993, p. 313); or as RuPaul teaches us: ‘we’re born naked, the rest is drag’ (1995). But ‘biodrag’ allows for a distinct kind of ‘subject fiction’: ‘subject fiction’ expresses the body-as-rhetoric, as fiction and persuasion (p. 367). Using Testogel (the branded testosterone gel he applies) as drag material allows Preciado to intensify Butler’s conception of gender performativity: in his writing, performativity becomes biodrag, or ‘living mimicry’, which, in comparison with performativity, he can control: he chooses his dose of testosterone, and the time and frequency of its application (p. 191). Biodrag is, he writes, the ‘technical imitation of the very materiality of the living being, the pharmacopornographic production of somatic

fictions of masculinity and femininity' (p. 191). Here, he means biodrag bodily mimics the construction of subject and gender fictions, but also produces comparable, queered fictions. Thus, Preciado's body is not simply a tool of queer rhetoric, rather his body mimics, and produces, its constructions of fictions.

For Preciado, the contraceptive pill, which manufactures periods, or technically imitates periods, represents an example of biodrag: John Rock, a Catholic doctor, designed the first pill to appear 'normal' and 'reassuring' to women, believing it must be a variant of the 'rhythm method' if it produced periods (2011, p. 961). The pill both epitomises biodrag through its representation of the 'living mimicry' of performativity, and elucidates the permeability of rhetoric, specifically the absorption of religious rhetoric through biodrag. Accordingly, biodrag is a declaration of the potential bodily permeation of rhetoric: whether queer, religious or 'pharmacopornographic'. My chapter will discuss this practice of biodrag through three distinct drags: *grief-drag*, drag as a means of mourning; *viral-drag*, Preciado's framing of biodrag through the structure of a virus, and *hairy-arm-drag*, describing Preciado's identification with testosterone and masculinity. My final section examines skin's capacity to enable biodrag. Through skin, and these sub-drags, I hope to theorise 'biodrag', and explore how queer politics permeates bodies in *Testo Junkie*.

### **Grief-Drag**

Drag and mourning have been historically intertwined: David Halperin writes of the 'fire island widows', who mourned their partners who died of AIDS by dressing as Italian widows: there was no mourning model for gay men, so they adopted their own (2012, p. 186). Halperin writes: '*camp works to drain suffering of the pain that it also does not deny*' (p. 186). Furthermore, urban legend dictates that the Stonewall Riots were precipitated by Judy Garland's death: drag queens and kings arrived to mourn Garland – and organised activist groups. Drag and mourning are deeply connected practices. *Testo Junkie* opens with Guillaume Dustan's lonely death: Dustan was a queer activist, writer, and Preciado's friend and former partner; he was HIV positive and died of a drug overdose. Preciado writes, reporting a telephone conversation with a friend: 'It's William, it's William. We found him dead in his new apartment in Paris. We don't know. It happened two days ago, on the third. We just don't know' (p. 15). Preciado notes: 'Until now, no one was aware of your death. You rotted for two days in the same position in which you had fallen. It's better like that. No one came to bother you. They left you alone with your body, the time necessary for

abandoning in peace all that misery' (p. 15). He continues: 'I cry with Tim. It can't be' (p. 15), before his grief provides impetus for his testo-project: 'A few hours later, I put a fifty-milligram dose of Testogel on my skin, so that I can begin to write this book' (p. 16). In the following scene, Preciado takes testosterone, applies a moustache, inserts two dildos and films himself: 'I do it to avenge your death', he claims, referring to Dustan (p. 16). Preciado addresses the narrative chapters of his book to Dustan, writing: 'You're the only one who could read this book [...] Design an image of myself as if I were you. *Do you in drag*. Cross-dress into you. Bring you back to life with this image' (p. 19). Here, Preciado's applications of testosterone are configured as a mourning-ritual, 'grief-drag', or drag configured as a means of defence against death and finitude.

*Testo Junkie* is bookended with Dustan's death, ending with a description of his funeral and grave: 'As we walk away from your body, which has already begun to ferment among the flowers of Montparnasse, I promise you that we will come to rub our bodies against your grave, that we will come to leave the traces of our bodily fluids on the slab; like a pack of mutating wolves, we will sleep on your earth, warm your bones; and like vampires, we will come to quench your thirst for sex, blood, and testosterone' (p. 427). Here, Preciado is quite literally rubbing in his queer vitality, juxtaposed with, or inaugurated by, Dustan, who lies fermenting, 'bones' (p. 427). He also describes himself and his partner as 'vampires', defined by eternal life, in comparison with Dustan's theory and body, characterised by finitude, in Preciado's writing: HIV, drugs and death suffuse *Testo Junkie*, specifically, a queer politics of death, infection, intoxication and futurity.

Preciado presents both his project and Dustan's politics through the lens of queer death, writing: 'queer politics as you understood it was nothing other than a preparation for death: *via mortis*. A politics primarily about death, without any vitalistic populism: a reaction in the face of the biopolitics and passion of the decaying body, in the process of decomposition, cultural necrophilia. Queer politics has died with those who initiated it and succumbed to the retrovirus. Like you' (p. 417). Here, 'like you' is both grieving and accusatory. *Testo Junkie*, by virtue of its grief-drag, is also '*via mortis*', but Preciado's scathing 'without any vitalistic populism' condemns Dustan and implies the necessity of 'vitalistic populism' in his own emergent theory: he configures a 'politics primarily about death' as the antithesis of *his* research and practice. For Preciado, queer politics 'has died' *because* it lived in, and on, decaying bodies. In contrast, Preciado presents the reader with the possibility inherent in 'biodrag', which represents futurity, and a politics and rhetoric reaching beyond queer death.

Preciado also implies that Dustan chose death, after writing that queer politics had died, ‘like you’: ‘Therein you were perhaps right to commit suicide, if that’s what you really did’ (p. 418). According to the autopsy, his mother and ‘the few newspapers that reported on (your) death’, Dustan died of a drug overdose: ‘an overdose of biopolitics, of a lethal cocktail of tritherapy and antidepressants’ (p. 418). But Preciado wonders, ‘did you voluntarily escape this implacable political game to transform your body into stardust, to take it out of the market of life so that all of your body that would remain was words, like legible molecules? You gambled with your body, as well. You were playing with death’ (p. 418). Preciado eulogizes queer theory, concurrently minimizing Dustan’s contribution, noting that ‘few newspapers’ reported his death (p. 418). He also presents his suicide as the logical extension of choosing a queer politics of death: his theory was dead, thus his death was ‘perhaps right’ (p. 418). Despite framing it as a choice, Preciado, angry and grieving, narratively implies that his theory killed him. Preciado writes that Dustan ‘succumbed to the retrovirus’, although it seems that he either killed himself or died of a drug overdose (p. 418). Here, Preciado aligns HIV-positive queer bodies with inevitable death, an unusual and problematic configuration considering the capacity of contemporary medicine to reduce viral loads to undetectable levels. ‘Bugchasing’ describes the practice of seeking to be infected with HIV through unprotected sex; crucially, HIV is now described as a ‘bug’ to be caught, rather than the ‘wine-dark kiss of the angel of death’ – Tony Kushner’s phrasing in the context of the US in the 1990s (1993, p. 21).

Ultimately, Preciado’s elision of queer theory and death expresses the fear of death inextricably intertwined with queer identities in the 1990s. Preciado describes Hervé Guibert’s infection with HIV and death in the style of Kushner depicting the height of the AIDS epidemic in *Angels in America*: ‘hundreds of worms were already weaving a sheet of white silk for the day of his death. The worms would enter through his ass and spread a soft fabric around his entrails, without making the slightest noise. The heavenly retrovirus had fallen in love with a young blond angel, as he would next fall in love with you’ (p. 415). Here, synonymous with Kushner’s ‘angel of death’, the ‘heavenly retrovirus’ is revealed (p. 415). Elliot Evans notes that, for Preciado, HIV prevention campaigns and antiretroviral drugs, along with the red ribbons displayed on World AIDS day, have ‘allowed people to forget about the enveloping death which inaugurated queer politics’ (2015). AIDS-related queer death and queer bodily vulnerability punctuated Preciado’s youth.

Thus, Preciado characterises Dustan as vulnerable and desirous of protection; he buries the video he made of his testosterone application and dildo insertion: ‘I made a hole

in the soft, muddy earth along the river with my hands, just as I had when I buried a bird that had fallen from its nest, which I'd wanted to save when I was six years old, and which I'd suffocated by feeding it sandwich bread half soaked in milk' (p. 427). Dustan is a small, vulnerable bird (if performed by Preciado in dildo drag) and Preciado, his thwarted saviour. But Preciado's descriptions of Dustan also epitomize their combative relationship in life and death: he writes of an argument they had: 'I'm not a lesbian, I'm trans, a boy, that the fact that I don't have a shitty biocock like yours doesn't mean that I'm not a guy. I tell you, stop treating me like cow shit just because you take me for a girl' (p. 244). Arguably, Preciado combatively negotiates pharmacopornographic agency and subjectivity through Dustan's death: his pharmacopornographic theory is both established in opposition to Dustan's queer politics of death, and passes through it, like testosterone absorbed by skin. Dustan's death provides the skin, or boundary through which Preciado develops a theory of permeability, defined by pleasure and toxicity. Through Dustan's death and body, queer rhetoric is established, and defined, by permeation.

For Preciado, Testogel epitomises futurity, in comparison with Dustan; he writes, 'I am T' (meaning testosterone), which precedes: 'I am the future common artificial ancestor for the elaboration of a new species' (p. 140). Testosterone represents the 'liquid and microprosthetic future of technologies' (p. 140); Preciado describes the possibility of a 'T-Uber Male of the Future' (p. 224). Preciado also writes of his relationship with Dustan: 'You and I, who are looking ahead to the future monster. We talk about synthetic reproduction. You say that it shouldn't be called reproduction but synthetic production—the fabrication of an entirely new species' (p. 245). Here, again, Testogel's affinity with futurity is conceptualised both through and against his relationship with Dustan, and his Dustan-drag. Together, Dustan and Preciado conceive of the fabrication of a new species of technomales, but after his death, Preciado differentiates his theory from Dustan's 'snuff politics': 'snuff' referring to the controversial genre of 'snuff films', which purportedly depict actual murder (p. 345). Preciado writes that the objective of snuff, meaning Dustan's politics and writing, is to make death 'visible, transforming it into public marketable representation' (p. 266). In comparison, Testogel is incorporable: the gel is odourless, colourless, and seamlessly slips into the skin: its invisibility makes gender slippage possible – slippage implied in his Testogel warning pamphlet which advises users to shower or wear clothes around presumed female partners. 'Snuff politics' represents the economy of the visible, and penetrable; Testogel represents an exhortation to be more slippery – in the context of our 'liquid and microprosthetic future' (p. 140).

Here, Preciado's biodrag problematizes queer rhetoric: firstly, Preciado oddly appears to position his theory against queer struggles for representation and visibility. Secondly, equating Dustan's theory with death in 2008, even if his writing evoked earlier death-ridden queer spaces, is notably old-fashioned. Evans, writing on Preciado, reminds us that 'HIV need no longer be a death sentence', but Preciado chooses to position Dustan's theory and death as nihilistic. Evans also notes that, for Preciado, 'To continue his (referring to Dustan) political lineage would be to sacrifice himself, to accept death' (2015, p. 136). His rejection of death is also, perhaps, a rejection of the bio-body – of its vulnerability and inherent weaknesses. *Testo Junkie*'s depiction of Dustan's funeral also represents Preciado's narrative opportunity to assert his vitality and permeability, in contrast to his friend's vulnerability. Dustan is 'ferment(ing)'; Preciado is adopting hormonal prosthetics, extending his body and his politics into futurity (p. 427).

Consequently, Testogel is the antithesis of death: it represents futurity, and a queer politics beyond Dustan. But Testogel is also a product of mourning for Preciado, a substance enabling this conceptualisation of grief-drag. Preciado writes of his first drag king workshop in 1998, in New York: 'During the years when I inhabited the city of the living dead, I turned, in my struggle against an endemic loneliness, to a system for that training and construction of identity techniques developed by queer and trans micropolitics' (p. 364). He writes that drag helped him 'overcome [...] depression', and became a 'technique of self': he writes: 'this technique [...] is what would next allow me to resist being disappointed in politics, to resist succumbing completely to disenchantment and to your death' (p. 364). Here, Preciado explicitly acknowledges that he 'does' Dustan in drag, and also that 'I am T', is an attempt to 'do' Dustan specifically through chemical, microprosthetic drag (p. 140). Drag is an 'open process of mutation', Preciado writes, that allows him to simultaneously grieve, occupy Dustan's body, and inhabit the gender he now adopts (p. 333). Thus, drag is synonymous with the affective method of testosterone incorporation: it enables mutation, but also activates already present, dormant, bodily processes and mechanisms of transformation. Equally, queer politics, through drag, is capable of incorporation, mutation, and transformation.

Preciado's grief-drag also epitomises queer reproduction, or proliferation – which, in *Testo Junkie*, is a synthesis of a generative, utopian strain of queer theory following Muñoz, and a negative axis of queer theory – epitomised by Dustan in Preciado's writing, and representative of writers such as Lee Edelman. Edelman's *No Future* advocates a 'child-aversive, future-negating' politics (2004, p. 113). Edelman writes that the 'politics of

reproductive futurism, the only politics we're permitted to know, organises and administers an apparently self-regulating economy of sentimentality in which futurity comes to signify access to the realisation of meaning [...] (p. 113). Similarly, Preciado has written recently of reproductive energy 'funnelled into productive channels and transformed into financial value' (2018). He writes that reproduction is the 'most crucial dimension of contemporary power': contemporary power regimes naturalise biological reproduction for profit (2018). For Preciado, the 'Trump era' is a 'recrudescence of necropatriarchal technologies of power': 'the nation-state and the biomedical industry compete for control of women's wombs, the former seeking to maintain women's reproductive labor as a national resource, the latter dreaming about the transformation of the uterus into a bioenvironment subject to free-market economics' (2018). Here, Preciado implicitly references the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes, symbolised by 'nation-state' and 'biomedical industry', and elucidates how contemporary power doubly penetrates (disciplinary) and permeates (pharmacopornographic) the (predominantly female) body. Thus, both Edelman and Preciado explore the troubling centrality of biological reproduction.

But Edelman proposes that queer resistance resides in the queer inability to reproduce – because biological reproduction encodes the simultaneous reproduction of the political order. In comparison, Preciado, following Butler and theories of performativity, examines how biodrag can interrupt and reorganise repetition and reproduction. Biodrag inevitably encodes reproduction, of gender norms and body norms, but it also interrupts them: see Halperin's Fire Island widows – queer bodies inhabiting the processes of Catholic mourning rituals. Biodrag, including grief-drag, makes visible repetitive, habitual processes inherent in the construction of gender and sexuality, and makes use of repetition's vulnerability to variation. For Preciado, grief-drag, and biodrag more broadly, represent queer, performative interventions into biological, profitable imperatives to reproduce.

Here, Preciado's theory and practice represent Muñozian 'working on and against' (1999, p. 46-47). Preciado writes with awe of the reproductive power of pharmacology: 'nothing is easier than reproducing a drug and guaranteeing its chemical synthesis on a massive scale' (p. 54). He writes of the production of subjects, rather than objects, through drug reproduction; we are 'technobiopolitically equipped to screw, reproduce the National Body, and consume'; he adds that the objective of pharmacopornography is the production of 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' (pp. 118-119). Thus, Preciado analyses the reproduction of the technopolitical

order, and stages an intervention: increased testosterone production increases fertility and reproductive potency in the ‘adult male’; in comparison, if taken by women, or trans-men, testosterone can be used as a contraceptive, troubling biological reproduction and financial production. Preciado’s project can be interpreted as queer reproduction: a performative intervention into the ‘politics of reproductive futurism’ (p. 113).

When Preciado admits his addiction to testosterone and biodrag, he writes: ‘I am the future common artificial ancestor for the elaboration of new species in the perpetually random processes of mutation and genetic drift’ (p. 140). Although Preciado wrote recently that it is ‘urgently necessary to denaturalise reproduction’, the ‘elaboration of a new species’ through mutation represents a form of reproduction (2018; p. 140). This queer reproduction through biodrag is cooperative: access to a variety of hormones would proliferate queer bodies. Biodrag also represents performative reproduction, in contrast to biological reproduction, perhaps activating Edelman’s negation of futurity as well as Muñoz’s queer utopianism. Preciado encourages cis women to take testosterone, encouraging the reproduction, or multiplication of queered bodies which are unable to biologically reproduce. In comparison with the controlled reproduction of technobiopolitics, Preciado presents the reader with performative, queer reproduction, which negates ‘necropatriarchal’ reproduction (2018). Here, Preciado troubles the association of queerness with death: while taking T, Preciado embodies Dustan, and grief-drag becomes, to some extent, HIV-drag: he enacts queer subjectification through the viral structure of HIV (explored below), but negates its potential for queer death through the format of biodrag.

For Preciado, political subjectivity ‘emerges precisely when the subject does not recognise itself in its representation’, following Lacan’s theories of subjectification, in which recognition is always synonymous with misrecognition (p. 397). Preciado writes that it is ‘fundamental not to recognise oneself’ (p. 397). Equally, Edelman writes that the queerness of anti-futurity would ‘deliberately sever ourselves from the assurance [...] of knowing ourselves’ (p. 5). For Edelman, biological reproduction is associated with the ‘realisation of meaning’ and an ‘economy of sentimentality’ (p. 113). Similarly, for Preciado, our capacity to reproduce *produces* our conception of ‘human’, and wholeness, associated with ‘realisation’ (2018). Accordingly, in order to ‘work on and against’ pharmacopornographic capitalism, the ‘elaboration of a new species’, or queer reproduction through biodrag, must involve what Preciado describes as ‘crumbling’: of ‘sexual identity into a multiplicity of desires, practices, and aesthetics’ which accompany ‘new molecular

sensibilities’ (pp. 140; 83). This ‘crumbling’ is a crumbling of wholeness, and of conceptions of the human defined by biological reproduction.

Thus, grief-drag enables queer futurity in *Testo Junkie* – but a futurity informed by queer death, mourning and the negation of reproduction. Biodrag can be defined through a synthesis of Edelman and Muñoz, and is established *through* Dustan’s body and death, rather than against them. Preciado inhabits Dustan’s body in his elaboration of biodrag and queer reproduction. But through his configuration of Testogel as the antithesis of death, Preciado frames his grief-drag as a defence against death, as well as a performance of queer resistance. Preciado’s grief-drag represents frustration with vulnerable bodies, Dustan’s in particular. His grief-drag also angrily equates queer rhetoric and queer visibility with death.

Drag, thus also grief-drag and biodrag, are, crucially, defined by the speed of transformation: AIDS-related queer death in the 1990s was painful, often slow, and painfully visible. In a recent interview in the *Guardian*, Rupert Everett wrote of ‘living in terror’ during the AIDS epidemic: ‘Especially being in front of a camera; I lived in fear of a cameraman saying: “What’s that on your face, Rupert?”’ (2017). Everett expresses the fear of the visible manifestation of HIV, and his inability to escape its possible representation, and branding. In comparison, Preciado writes that drag is ‘subject fiction in a flash’: drag allows for the adoption of different skins, and in *Testo Junkie*, operates like a virus, through its replication and mutation of identity (p. 367). Drag also allows for the quick absorption of queerness. Testogel, drag’s chemical counterpart in biodrag, is equally capable of this process of new skin adoption – for example, Preciado describes how it produces unrecognisable new sweat.

### **Viral-Drag**

For Preciado, viral-drag is a productive form of queer resistance or invention: ‘subject fiction in a flash’, mirroring the speed of drag (p. 367). After taking part in drag king workshops, he writes: ‘once the drag king virus had been triggered in each participant, the hermeneutics of gender suspicion extend beyond the workshop and spread to the rest of daily life’ (p. 373). Here, Preciado specifically positions queer rhetoric as a virus, capable of multiplying, spreading and infecting the body politic. The ‘drag king virus’ also evokes Dustan’s ‘barebacking’ conflict with ACT UP Paris (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) during the AIDS crisis. Dustan opposed a perceived policing of gay sex, and advocated instead what Oliver Davis terms ‘arse-sex-positive’ sexuality (2015). Preciado writes of

Dustan: ‘barebacking wasn’t just a political bitch-slap invented by a handful of San Francisco kamikazes to pull the bottom out of anti-AIDS preventive politics; it was the only way to sock it to somebody during three short good minutes. You can’t roll a condom onto a flaccid cock’ (p. 418). Preciado adds that, for Dustan, ‘The problem was to keep getting hard on winter days for dead lovers, for the books you didn’t have the time to write. Keeping hard [...]’ (p. 419). Preciado describes the peeling apart of pleasure from queer death: for Dustan, barebacking enabled the assertion of queer pleasure; ‘keeping hard’ represented exercising defiant forms of pleasure that resisted easy categorisation, and resisting a perceived demonization of gay sex (p. 419).

Larry Kramer, eulogizing Stephen Gendin in 2000, demands of the assembled crowd: ‘This was the new activism (ACT UP). Do you remember it? It’s almost as dead as Stephen. Well, like Stephen, it was wonderful while it lived. Fighting the enemy with devoted comrades-in-arms makes you feel wonderful. And clean. Is your life wonderful now? Do you feel clean? Have all these shitty drugs we fought so hard to get made you feel wonderful and clean?’ (2000). Like Kramer, Preciado asserts our collective toxicity through his testosterone project, our inability to feel ‘wonderful and clean’, and, through his theory, implies that ‘fighting the enemy’ involves acknowledging our ‘dirtiness’: he writes, ‘all bodies are at the same time toxic drug and addicted subject’, accordingly we all embody toxicity (p. 302). This acknowledgement of toxicity is an affirmation of the queer negativity of barebacking practised and advocated by Dustan, which is contingent on the fear and thrill of toxicity: both the toxicity of HIV/AIDS, and the drugs reducing its viral load.

Crucially, for Preciado, barebacking as a model appears to affirm pleasure through speed, virality and multiplicity. Tyler Argüello and Catherine Waldby have written that medicine pathologises multiplicity and hybridity as the ‘subjectivity of contagion’, which creates unstable identities; in comparison, *queer subjectivity*, Argüello writes, ‘tries to interfere’ in the relationship between the naturalised body and normative social orders sanctioned by medical discourse (2016). Argüello notes: ‘Queer theory looks to dislodge this concordance through insistent adoption of viral processes of rapid transformation, mutation, and momentary identity, processes against which the normative subject wishes to defend itself.’ He concludes: ‘the endgame of queer theory would be to use these viral processes as a way to infect and hence transform the body politic’ (2016). Thus, through Waldby and Argüello, barebacking represents an acknowledgement of toxicity and virality, and complicity in their processes, queer-as-virus represents interference in heteronormativity. Queer rhetoric (as well as queer bodies) is capable of infection and

transformation. Barebacking also specifically positions the queer body as permeable: open to exchanges, and open to queer rhetoric, rather than vulnerable; here, queer bodies inhabit perceived toxicity (whether antiretroviral drugs, HIV or AIDS), rather than being inhabited, or colonised, by it. Argüello writes of the ‘colonisation of human identities with viral identities’ which Preciado affirms in *Testo Junkie* (2016).

And queer virality is defined through fluids; barebacking suggests penetration, but it also specifically evokes semen. The celebration of practices known as ‘breeding’ and ‘seeding’ are fundamental to bareback discourse; Chris Ashford notes that the “transmission’ of seminal fluid from one partner to another not only deposits genetic material, but serves to breach the membrane of hygiene and ‘good gay’ sex that homonormative and contemporary sex education seeks to prescribe’ (2015, p. 196). Equally, biodrag, through hormonal transmission, disrupts conceptions of femininity and masculinity and allows for the permeation of queer rhetoric and politics, to counter heteronormativity. But, Preciado and Dustan also discuss the possibility of filtering his sperm, in order to produce ‘the future monster’ and fabricating an entirely new species’ (p. 234). Preciado writes that this process must begin with filtering Dustan’s sperm; but adds: ‘Before you got HIV, spreading your genes probably wouldn’t have been of interest to you’ (p. 234). For Dustan, ‘infected’ sperm is intrinsically interesting, capable of producing unknowable ‘monsters’, even ‘savior(s)’, Preciado writes (p. 245). He adds that although Dustan suggests filtration, he hates Preciado for it: ‘You hate me because I’m incapable of wanting that sick sperm as it is, incapable of jerking you off right away and putting your contaminated sperm into my vagina; you hate me because, like you, I’m afraid of dying’ (p. 417). Here, the synthetic constituent of biodrag is made clear. Preciado applies Testogel, which is symbolic of Dustan, and which disrupts bio-masculinity, but Testogel is not ‘infected’. Testogel is filtered, sterile Dustan – analogous with filtered sperm. Biodrag performs the transgressive transmission of fluids, and inhabits the structure of a virus, but protects Preciado’s body from infection.

However, Preciado briefly considers inseminating himself with Dustan’s sperm, writing: ‘What would happen if it was one of your spermatozoids infected with AIDS that contained the gene of the future savior of the planet?’ (p. 299). Later, Preciado quotes Canguilhem: ‘All living forms are, to use Louis Roule’s expression in *Les poissons*, ‘normalised monsters’ (p. 245). Ultimately, accepting the premise that pharmacopornography involves the production of subjects rather than objects, or people rather than things: for Preciado, the epitome of the pharmacopornographic subject is the

‘normalised monster’ (p. 245). But the *proliferation* of pharmacopornographic subjects, thus monsters, propelled by capitalism’s growth imperative, is equally necessary. In *Testo Junkie*, this proliferation is achieved through virality. Although resisted by Preciado in his refusal to inseminate himself with Dustan’s sperm, this proliferation is activated through viral-drag: here meaning queer subjectivity inhabiting the structure of a virus – specifically, its speed, mutability and capability to reproduce.

Preciado writes that challenging gender construction and production ‘can be accomplished only through viral proliferation’: ‘politics interests me in the same way that the virus is strongly interested by the epidemic [...] my body: the body of the multitude’ (p. 247). He anthropomorphises politics and viruses as desirous of becoming-epidemic, writing that feminism ‘interests’ him in the same way that the ‘earth is interested in bacteria’ (p. 247). ‘On all fronts, in all spaces’, multiplication and proliferation represent ‘survival’ and the resistance of fossilisation and rigidity (p. 247). And virality requires openness to infection, or transmission. Thus, permeability is the precondition for virality, a state of perpetual, unregulated openness – to exchanges of all kinds.

When Preciado describes the process of filtering sperm, he writes: ‘we talk about filtering your sperm to separate the spermatozoids that are carrying the HIV virus from the others. Separating the weak cells from the strong ones. The bad from the good’ (p. 396). His description reveals a helpful distinction: ‘strong’ cells are unmoving and rigid, weak, infected cells appear permeable, capable of multiplication and hybridity. But weak cells are fundamentally vulnerable – susceptible to finitude rather than perpetual exchange. When Preciado describes the separation of spermatozoids, he reveals both his admiration for the permeable nature of viral cells, while condemning their vulnerability and inherent affinity with death. For Preciado, ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ express the double nature of HIV-infected cells: they are both, simultaneously. In Preciado’s writing, viral proliferation is necessary for the destabilisation of bio-bodies, queer theory and feminism. But Preciado is also afraid of dying, and infection; he marvels at the structure of the virus, but from a distance. His description of HIV cells recalls Kramer’s eulogy: ‘Do you feel clean?’ (2000). Preciado is afraid of infecting his ‘clean’ cells with ‘dirty’ cells: he marvels at the structure of a virus, from a distance.

Biodrag represents a significant choice: Preciado embodies the structure of a virus, rather than inhabiting the (potentially infected) queer body; equally, Preciado uses Testogel, rather than inseminating himself with Dustan’s sperm. Thus, Preciado’s body is defined by *regulated* permeability, or regulated openness – acknowledging the vulnerability inherent in

exposure. For Preciado, vulnerability is synonymous with finitude and relationality; in contrast, permeability expresses vulnerability, but through complicity, processes of exchange and multiplicity – as explored in an earlier chapter. In Preciado’s writing, viral proliferation is necessary for the destabilisation of bio-bodies, queer theory and feminism, but can only be ‘activated’ through the proliferation of permeability, rather than vulnerability. Ultimately, permeability is a precondition for virality, and virality is a precondition for permeability: virality produces permeability, and permeability produces virality. Vulnerability, by virtue of its nature as a wound that concludes at the point of contact, is neither capable of exchanges, nor inherently multipliable.

Elliot Evans also writes of Preciado’s distaste for vulnerability: he ‘seeks to harness the urgency of anti-AIDS activism during the late 1980s, a time when the vulnerability of bodies was all too evident’ (Evans, 2015). ‘All too evident’ expresses the need for permeability in contrast with vulnerability: permeable bodies are capable of fluidly giving and receiving, in comparison with merely receiving – following Malabou’s distinction between plasticity and flexibility. The erotic comedy film, *Shortbus* (2006) also distinguishes between permeability and impermeability in relation to AIDS. Tobias, a former mayor of New York, reflects on the city:

But you know what’s the most wonderful thing about New York? It’s where everyone comes to get fucked. It’s one of the last places where people are still willing to bend over to let in the new. And the old. New Yorkers are very permeable... Therefore, we’re sane. Consequently, we’re the target of the impermeable. And the insane. And of course, New York is where everyone comes to be forgiven... People said I didn’t do enough to help prevent the AIDS crisis, because I was in the closet. That’s not true. I did the best I could. I was scared, and impermeable. Everybody knew so little then. I know even less now (Cerankowski 2014, p. 189).

Here, queer permeability is presented as healthy and necessary, rather than dangerous. Cynthia Barounis writes that Tobias powerfully reverses a conservative logic which depicts the AIDS epidemic as a ‘problem of promiscuously breached bodily borders’ (Cerankowski 2014, p. 189). Linda Williams also writes that the film is about characters ‘whose impermeability needs fixing’: to ‘bend over and let in the new’ and to ‘get fucked’ is depicted as restorative, and is ‘framed as part of a larger political and ethical imperative to “fix” one’s too-rigid personal boundaries’ (2014, p. 190). Equally, Preciado takes Testogel to ‘foil what society wanted to make of me, so that I can write, fuck, feel a form of pleasure

that is postpornographic’, and so he can dissolve his ‘rigid personal boundaries’ (p. 16). Preciado presents his permeable body and skin in opposition with vulnerable bodies unknowingly incorporated into pharmacopornographic power.

Ultimately, opposing vulnerability to permeability expresses the difference between complicity and relationality, a distinction developed in an earlier chapter. Preciado writes that the virus is ‘strongly interested by the epidemic [...] my body: the body of the multitude’; here, the virus is synonymous with the body, and by extension, both the epidemic and the multitude of bodies (p. 247). Accordingly, through viral-drag, we *are* viruses, rather than inhabited by them. Here, rather than dividing theories and bodies, Preciado describes their synthesis. Later in the text, Preciado describes how we imbibe power whenever we can, and it multiplies like a virus, with the potential to trouble and destabilise existing power structures. He writes: ‘it is the body desiring power, seeking to swallow it, eat it, administer it, wolf it down, more, always more, through every hole, by every possible route of application. Turning oneself into power’ (p. 208). For Preciado, ‘power’ is testosterone gel, and the body he describes is inevitably ‘pharmacopornographic’ (p. 208). When Butler expresses the necessity of emphasising our vulnerability, she simultaneously describes our relationality, and our individual and collective positions in hierarchical power structures – and concurrently, their inherent injustice. In comparison, Preciado describes how we imbibe power whenever we can, and it multiplies like a virus, troubling and destabilising Butler’s ‘I’: the vulnerable, yet empowered, ‘I’ becomes the shifting, complicit monster of the multitude.

Preciado’s viral theory also relates to praxis: he writes that activists in ACT UP ‘invented the first strategies of “anti-pharmacopornographic activism”’: ‘fighting AIDS became fighting the biopolitical and cultural apparatuses of the production of the AIDS syndrome’ (p. 337). These apparatuses included advertising campaigns, health organisations, the government, genome-sequencing programs and pharmacological industries, among others listed by Preciado. In comparison, Preciado’s alignment with pharmacopornography through his ritualised testosterone applications, even though he acquires his Testogel illegally, implies criticism of ACT UP’s methods. Here, perhaps Preciado views their fight on all battlegrounds as the attempted murder of Hydra, a monster growing heads as quickly as they can be severed, multiplying like a virus. In comparison, *Testo Junkie* expresses the desire for bio bodies to merge with prosthetic bodies until they become indistinguishable, for genders to slip into each other, and for ‘normalised monsters’ to become the ‘body of the multitude’ (p. 247). Accordingly, Preciado advocates becoming-

monster and becoming-epidemic in order to resist the same. Monster and monstrosity have been historically intertwined with queerness; monster has often been used as a metaphor for queerness.<sup>9</sup> In Preciado's writing, the monster is reclaimed: in *Testo Junkie* 'monster' signifies a queer body, or a techno-body, in comparison with a bio-body. Ultimately, for Preciado, inhabiting the hybrid, multiplying structure of the virus, through viral-drag, is the only way to rapidly produce different, and new, queer, monstrous bodies and queer politics.

### **Hairy-Arm Drag**

Our third sub-drag, 'Hairy Arm', is Preciado's shorthand for masculinity's prosthetic, as opposed to biological, construction. Preciado describes his affinity with sexuality and masculinity through the 'Hairy Arm': 'your basic Hairy Arm heterosexual masturbator' (p. 407). He describes the Hairy Arm through a pornographic film he watches: a hairy arm intermittently intrudes in sex scenes, fondling the performers: 'a short, fat, hairy arm enters the frame [...] touches first one breast, then the other' (p. 407). Later the 'hairy arm reappears in the frame, pushes back the hair to reveal the girl's breasts'; the hairy arm grabs the woman's neck while 'a short thick cock moves across the frame for a brief moment, immediately disappearing under the girl's body. She is sitting on a body that seems to be the anatomical continuation of the hairy arm' (p. 407). Preciado concludes that the main subjects of the film are 'a white hairy arm and a mini-cock without a body [...] in this case, the girl is a simple masturbatory bio-device' (p. 407). Preciado is both concerned about his eventual slippage into the 'Hairy Arm' (which evokes B movie tropes – the disembodied arm, terrorising the nation!) and delights in his transformation: 'Will I become a Hairy Arm if I keep on taking testosterone?' (p. 408). Although he writes that testosterone 'isn't masculinity', he adds that it is a 'by-product' that has been the 'exclusive property of cis-males', 'until now' (p. 141). Thus, Preciado separates testosterone from masculinity and frames 'biodrag' as theft: his potential transformation into the Hairy Arm involves accessing by-products and effects which are normally forbidden to him.

Preciado's preferred method of becoming-monster, or constructing prosthetic masculinity, is the application of testosterone – specifically Testogel. His testo-habit is a

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Patricia MacCormack's 'The Queer Ethics of Monstrosity' in Picart C.J.S., Browning J.E. (eds) *Speaking of Monsters* (2012), Palgrave Macmillan, or Jack Halberstam's *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (1995), Duke University Press.

means to ‘avenge’ Dustan’s death, a substance capable of troubling genders, images and identities, an alchemical ritual, a subscription to futurity, the architecture of his adoption of masculinity, and an addiction – which the following chapter will explore. Firstly, Testogel provides a distinct contrast to the Pill, and penetration: the substance has ‘no taste or colour, leaves no traces’ (p. 67). Preciado writes that testosterone ‘dissolves into the skin as a ghost walks through a wall. It enters without warning, penetrates without leaving a mark [...] it’s enough to bring it near my skin, and its mere proximity to the body causes it to disappear into and become diluted in my blood’ (p. 67). Pornography, penetration and the Pill, by virtue of their materiality, thus attachment to an economy of presence, sustain Butler’s stable ‘I’; in comparison, Testogel is barely present.

Preciado also notes that although the administration of testosterone ‘isn’t easy to detect with the naked eye’, it is ‘changing the hormonal composition’ of his body ‘substantially’: ‘*modus molecularis*’; it represents ‘potential transformation’ (pp. 140-141). The ‘alchemy of testosterone coursing through’ Preciado’s blood allows him to both envisage his body ‘with and without a cock’: he ‘takes turns’ at imagining different bodies, alternately performing the existence and absence of a penis (p. 88). But even while conjuring a bio-cock, he knows: ‘the moment I get undressed, she’ll see only one of these bodies. Being reduced to one fixed image frightens me.’ Later in the text he writes of the fundamental importance of not recognising oneself: ‘de-recognition, dis-identification is a condition for the emergence of the political as the possibility of transforming reality’ (p. 397). For Preciado, Testogel enables dis-identification, and the ‘play’ of desubjectification and subjectification, and its effects and affects are frighteningly, powerfully impermanent. In comparison with the reliably sturdy dildo, hanging on the door of the bathroom, his imagined bio-cock, a product of alchemical testosterone ‘postidentity drift’ is slippery and intangible (p. 224).

Thus, testosterone appears capable of troubling identity and enabling ‘post-identity drift’ (p. 224). Arthur Kroker, following Butler, Hayles and Haraway, has conceptualised a similar concept: ‘body drift’, which expresses how we ‘no longer inhabit *a* body, in any meaningful sense of the term, but rather occupy a multiplicity of bodies – imaginary, sexualised, disciplined, gendered, labouring, technologically augmented bodies’ (2012, p. 2). Our bodies are ‘increasingly dispersed, intermediated, unfinished, spliced, straining’: ‘nothing is as imaginary as the material body’ (p. 3). Kroker writes that the codes governing these bodies are in drift: ‘random, fluctuating, changing’ (p. 2). Equally, Preciado’s imagined body ‘with and without a cock’ expresses the ‘unfinished’ nature of the techno-

bio body composite: testosterone allows his body to be defined and redefined through augmentation and multiplicity.

Additionally, when Preciado writes of the ‘alchemy of testosterone’ coursing through his blood, he describes the body’s ‘imaginary’ construction: ironically, considering the pharmacological origin and synthetic nature of the hormone, he associates his testo-body with magic, invoking medieval chemistry.<sup>10</sup> In an earlier chapter, he writes that witch-hunts concealed the ‘criminalisation of practices of voluntary intoxication and self-experimentation’. Purported ‘witches’, using herbs and ‘ritualistic practices’ ultimately represented a threat to the new professional and scientific orders (p. 152). But ‘alchemy’ specifically refers to the transformation of base metals into gold, an area of proto-chemistry dominated by monks, theological students and other restricted social enclaves: in order to attempt to make gold alchemically in England, you were required to purchase a licence from the contemporaneous king.

Thus, his invocation of alchemy both aligns his ritualistic testosterone applications with medieval ritualised practices of self-intoxication and self-transformation accessible through and accessed by women, and with gendered, restricted knowledge common only to men – specifically, theologians and kings. However, Preciado also writes of the parcelling up of common land concurrent with the witch hunts, and thus the restriction of knowledge to professionalization. Accordingly, his, technically illegal, applications of testosterone are an incitement to amateur alchemy – using any substances to hand, transforming ‘unfinished’ bodies and subjectivities through alchemical ‘splicing’; his practices and rituals are also an incitement to amateurism in general, and to the invocation of body-knowledge and self-experimentation associated with ‘witches’.

He first acknowledges the thrill of amateurism and experimentation when he opens a pack of Testogel and reads the accompanying warnings, reading: ‘Attention: Testogel should not be used by women’ (p. 58); ‘to guarantee the safety of one’s female partner, the patient is advised to observe a prolonged interval of time between application of the gel and the period of contact (p. 59). The product is ‘reserved for the adult male’, immediately implying the disruptive potential inherent in abuse. Preciado notes with glee: ‘How can such trafficking – the micro-diffusion of minute drops of sweat, the importing and exporting of vapours, such contraband exhalations – be controlled, surveyed; how to prevent the contact

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<sup>10</sup> Some of this writing on alchemy has been published on the University of Oxford’s Queer Studies Network blog: <https://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/testosterone-and-alchemy>.

of crystalline mists' (p. 65). Crucially, however, Testogel is capable of subjectification as well as desubjectification: the 'crystalline mists' do 'function as a substance for the manufacture of masculinity', rather than simply its infiltration, infection or deconstruction (p. 65). Preciado's comparison of testosterone applications with alchemy reveals his valorisation of transformation, but also gold, the end-product: masculinity. He writes that 'de-identification' is a condition for the 'emergence of the political as the possibility of transforming reality', but exalts testosterone (p. 397). Base metal is dull, indistinguishable; gold is reflective and singularly, valuably 'present' – gold provides Preciado with a mirror which reflects his imagined bio-cock, and his embodiment of masculinity.

For Preciado, Testogel (in combination with drag) is the architecture of this adopted masculinity: the first time he takes testosterone, he writes of an 'extraordinary lucidity' a couple of days later, followed by 'an explosion of the desire to fuck, walk, go out everywhere in the city' (p. 21). Preciado writes that he is 'in perfect harmony with the rhythm of the city'; he writes of 'the feeling of strength reflecting the increased capacity of my muscles, my brain [...] my body is present to itself' (p. 21). Preciado compares testosterone to heroin: 'The two drugs are politically dangerous and can lead to exclusion, marginalization, desocialization', but also writes that testosterone moulds his body in a more permanent way: the 'feeling of strength remains, like a pyramid uncovered by a sandstorm' (p. 21). For Preciado, the primary effects of testosterone are increased strength and sexual energy: he writes, 'the skin inside my mouth has become thicker. My tongue is like an erectile muscle. I feel that I could smash the window with my fist. I could leap to the balcony opposite and fuck my neighbour if she were waiting for me with her thighs spread' (p. 95). Thus, despite his comparison of testosterone with heroin in the context of marginalisation, here, he embodies male dominance.

While taking testosterone, he records no experiences of 'marginalisation' or 'exclusion', rather he writes that his body is 'in perfect harmony' with the city around him: here, 'perfect harmony' appears to be synonymous with strength and sexuality (p. 21). Testogel produces the form of masculinity inhabited by Preciado, but he also inhabits the gel: 'I am T'; 'Modus molecularis [...] the changes are not purely artificial. Testosterone existing externally is inserted into a molecular field of possibilities that already exist inside my body. Rather than rejection of it, there is assimilation, incorporation' (p. 141). In comparison with the vulnerable bodies of Preciado's sex worker, defined through penetration, testosterone is a complicit, permeable drug, characterised by assimilation. As explored earlier, vulnerability is receptive; permeability is reactive. Again, testosterone,

which assists his ‘biodrag’, activates assimilation – of queer bodies and queer politics; queer politics accompany testosterone in permeating his skin, aiding the production of queered masculinity.

But his embodiment of ‘T’ is also often awkward: he writes, ‘I can’t stand my own sweat when I’m on it. A smell that isn’t coming from somewhere else, from any other body, but from my skin, and from my skin directly to my pituitary gland and then toward my brain. I’m in T. I have become T’ (p. 422). His absorption and embodiment of T are laced with unfamiliarity: Testogel is odourless and colourless, but his body reacts with the gel, producing a substance composed of both synthetic testosterone and his previous ‘molecular field of possibilities’ (p. 422). He writes elsewhere that his sweat has become ‘sickly sweet, more acidic’, adding, ‘the smell of a plastic doll heated by the sun comes from me, apple liqueur abandoned at the bottom of a glass.’ Preciado writes scathingly of the ‘techno-Barbie’, ‘remaining eternally young and supersexualised’, and later notes, ‘I’ve always hated Barbie dolls, I’m repulsed by my breasts and my vagina’; yet, on testosterone, he describes how he sweats the ‘sickly sweet’ smell of a melted plastic doll (p. 220). Preciado’s description of his sweat implies a transition from synthetically plastic to synthetically produced plasticity: the rigid plastic doll with defined body parts is melting, dissolving the certainty of identification. Preciado also, again, evokes witches: specifically, the melting witch in *The Wizard of Oz* (often the subject of queer theory analysis), crying ‘I’m melting’, before dissolving into a puddle.<sup>11</sup> Preciado is both the dissolving witch, transforming his body into a liquid mess of testosterone, and the melting Barbie doll, emitting a ‘sickly sweet’ last gasp of femininity (p. 220).

Preciado also expresses this collision of bodies and identities when he writes: ‘I feel that I could smash the window with my fist. I could leap to the balcony opposite and fuck my neighbour if she were waiting for me with her thighs spread’ (p. 95). He follows this description with: ‘But this time, like an energising biosupplement being activated within a female cultural agenda, the testosterone compels me to tidy up and clean my apartment, frenetically, all night long’ (p. 95). In place of a sex scene, Preciado describes painstaking, silent cleaning: ‘my movements are precise [...] I pick up all the chairs, move the couch, the bed’ (p. 95). Preciado’s Testogel narratives are symbolic of (the power of) male sexuality; in comparison, his chapters on the Pill and pornography are concerned with the limitations of cis-women. But here, Preciado is subject to the ‘female cultural agenda’, in thrall to the

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Alexander Doty’s *Flaming Classics: Queering the Film Canon* (2002), Routledge.

Barbie doll and the wicked witch (p. 95). The blending of these narratives mimics the inability of the pharmacopornographic regime to displace older power regimes, for example, the gender binaries of Foucault's disciplinary regime: his descriptions express how both narratives co-exist, exerting power on his body.

Here, Testogel also appears to activate the collision of gender and sexuality: Bidy Martin has written that queer theorists often adopt an 'overly negative' interpretation of gender, writing of prisons, following Foucault. Martin notes that queer theorists adhere to the notion that 'gender identities are only constraining' and must, or can, be 'overridden by the greater mobility of queer desires' (2012, p. 47). Gender, of the inhibiting, constraining variety is coded female, whereas 'sexuality takes on the universality of man' (p. 92). Preciado's urge to smash a window with his fist and leap across and 'fuck (my) neighbour' is expressive of Martin's 'sexuality takes on the universality of man'; in comparison, gender is represented through the 'female cultural agenda', channelling his unbounded desire into cleaning.

The defining feature of Testogel is its slipperiness: it slips between commercial product reserved for 'athletes' and 'adult males', and the genderqueer substance of revolution; it enables grief-drag and activates permeability and futurity (p. 64). But, he notes, it also represents 'trafficking', between 'gynaecologists, laboratory researchers, pharmaceutical industries, prisons, and slaughterhouses': 'Each time I give myself a dose of testosterone, I agree to this pact. I kill the blue whale; I cut the throat of the bull at the slaughterhouse; I take the testicles of the prisoner condemned to death' (p. 163). As Preciado writes in an earlier chapter, he is both 'a port of insertion' and the 'vanishing point through which escapes the system's power to control' (p. 140). Testogel frames his mutating body as both the 'laboratory rat and the scientific subject that conducts the research'; but, significantly, it also activates the slippage or 'drift' between them (p. 140).

Crucially, Testogel is a prosthesis, indicative of prosthetic masculinity. Similarly, Preciado's description of the Hairy Arm is distinctly prosthetic: the Hairy Arm is 'short' and 'fat', like the 'short thick cock': both are disembodied, intrusive pornographic subjects (p. 407). Through separating testosterone from masculinity, and emphasising his potential Hairy Arm transformation, and his Hairy Arm-drag, Preciado implies the prosthetic nature of masculinity – and, accordingly, its potential for adoption or appropriation. But the separation of testosterone and masculinity also serves to convince the reader that adoption of 'masculinity', prosthetic or otherwise, is not contingent on biodrag. Masculinity is a fiction, and, he notes, 'only one' of the possible by-products of taking testosterone. Thus

‘biodrag’ is correspondingly fictitious, prosthetic and constructed. Biodrag is an open-source technology – if you can access hormones (p. 141). Again, here, Preciado describes the continuity of bodies and rhetoric: masculinity, sexuality and biodrag are fictions, bodily constructed and absorbed.

## **Skin**

Ultimately, this chapter examines the reconceptualization of skin: in *Testo Junkie*, skin is a dispersed organ available for re-functionalisation, rather than a sovereign container, tied to a sovereign body and subjectivity, a surface, or a policed border. Grief-drag analysed the ‘second skin’ of drag, and death as a skin or boundary; viral-drag explored the permeability of skin; Hairy-Arm drag examined (hairy) skin as a signifier of unitary, dominant subject positions – but also of portability and prosthetic masculinity.

In comparison with orality and penetrability, synonymous with sex workers, or wet workers, and the ‘dominant manifestations of the pharmacopornographic era’: ‘pills, prostheses, fellatio and double penetration’, Preciado’s body matrix for biodrag and permeability is skin, which enables Testogel’s slippery, intangible transfers, and the transmutation of drag into biodrag (p. 207). Orality is defined through its attachment to existing bodies and codes; in comparison, skin is genderless, sexless and regenerative (although, of course, not raceless). For Preciado, skin is a political battleground: it represents more than a ‘membrane of separation’, it is a ‘medium of connection or greatly intensified semiotic permeability of codes, signs, images, forms, desires’ (Connor 2009, p. 156). *Testo Junkie* affirms that the skin is the largest and ‘most public’ organ, thus must be the ‘main platform for somato-political and performative implantation and agency’. Here, Preciado refers to the process of subjectification and its accompanying agency (p. 322). Shaviro also describes skin as a platform - embodying the ultimate ‘threshold’ and acting as a porous boundary:

Its pores, orifices, and chemical gradients facilitate all sorts of passages and transfers. All along this surface, inside and outside come into intimate contact [...] nutrients are absorbed, poisons excreted, signals exchanged [...] my skin is the limit that confines me to myself, but it’s also the means by which I reach out to you [...] there lies the whole problem of communication, does it not? What goes in, what comes out, what gets transmitted across the membrane? (1997, p. 84).

Similarly, Preciado writes of the body: ‘its limits do not coincide with the skin capsule that surrounds it’, implying the skin’s capacity to enable ‘passages and transfers’. For Preciado, skin is the means of transfer, of both theories and testosterone, a transfer described as ‘autofeedback’: ‘the symbiotic relationship between bodies and theories’ (p. 184). The manual that accompanies Preciado’s packet of Testogel describes this relationship: ‘a manual for microfacism’ that advises users to ‘guarantee the safety of one’s female partner’ by avoiding contact for a ‘prolonged interval of time’ after applying the gel and to ‘wear a T-shirt over the site of application during the period of contact, or to shower before any sexual activity’ (p. 60). According to the manual, testosterone is considered a form of doping, the drug is ‘reserved for use by the adult male’, and should only be used in consultation with a physician (p. 62). But as Preciado points out, testosterone is a rare drug that spreads by sweat, ‘from skin to skin, body to body’: accordingly, ‘how can such trafficking – the microdiffusion of minute drops of sweat, the importing and exporting of vapours, such contraband exhalations - be controlled, surveyed; how to prevent the contact of crystalline mists...’ (p. 65) Significantly, the gel is spread through sweat and skin, rather than ingested; testosterone can slip intangibly into another (potentially female) body. Thus, it must be rigorously controlled to prevent gender and power slippage, or ‘undesirable’ side-effects like increased sexual energy or hirsutism.

Permeability is also characterised by ‘autofeedback’, or the relationship between bodies and theories: in *Testo Junkie*, theories are capable of permeating the body like Testogel. Preciado writes about synthesising Butler and Haraway’s work on the body in order to ‘push the performative hypothesis further into the body, as far as its organs and fluids; drawing it into the cells, chromosomes, and genes’ (p. 110). Here, performativity is permeable and becomes a bodily process. In *Testo Junkie*, both queer and pharmacopornographic politics can be absorbed through the skin like testosterone. Thus, as Claude Bernard wrote: ‘tout est poison, rien n’est poison. Tout est une question de dose’: dosage defines bodies and politics (1872).

In an article on Restif de la Bretonne, Preciado writes that the ‘sovereign’ body was a ‘skin’, constructed before dissection techniques were developed (2015). This sovereign body was a ‘flat exteriority’, a surface which could be politically inscribed (2015). He adds that plague, syphilis and tuberculosis resulted in new biopolitical techniques and medical interventions which led to the ‘modern disciplinary body’: this new body was ‘dense and deep’ with complex organs and fluids, rather than a flat skin (2015). In comparison with this disciplinary body, *Testo Junkie* describes the ‘pharmacopornographic’ body: characterized

by a ‘molecular field of possibilities’, and expressing a shift from corporal to molecular, and from ‘dense and deep’ to a body politically organised by blood and skin (p. 141).

*Testo Junkie* advocates ‘gender bioterrorism on a molecular scale’, Testogel is a ‘molecular door’; Preciado writes of ‘becoming molecular’ and adding ‘molecular prostheses’ to his ‘low-tech transgender identity’ (pp. 13; 143; 138; 16). Preciado’s emphasis on the ‘molecular’ dimension of bodies follows Deleuze, Guattari and Haraway. Haraway writes that this trend towards miniaturisation and camouflage has ‘turned out to be about power; small is not so much beautiful as pre-eminently dangerous, as in cruise missiles’ (2013, p. 106). Power has shrunk its material means of assertion in relation to the body, thus Preciado identifies emergent and equivalently molecular possibilities for resistance. Skin, a dispersed organ facilitating transfers, is well-placed to provide molecular resistance.

Malabou has written that contemporary management techniques and dispersed economic organization coincided with the interpretation of the brain as flexible and mutable (2008). Equally, Preciado notes that in societies dominated by communication, connection, travel and trade, it ‘isn’t surprising that a growing interest in the circulation of fluids and transmission of information inside the body came to the fore’ (2013, p. 153). According to Preciado, hormones have become ‘communicating secretions’, which organize the body into gender categories (p. 153). But they can also be hacked – for example, through Preciado’s control of his testosterone dosage (p. 155). Similarly, it seems that pharmacopornographic skin, in comparison with the ‘flat exteriority’ of the sovereign skin, and the ‘deep’ body of disciplinary politics, is networked: it facilitates molecular regulation and molecular hacking through the circulation of blood, hormones and chemicals (2015). Networked skin also allows permeability, which expresses complicity with both regulation and hacking, or a tension between ‘constancy and creation’, as Malabou defines plasticity.

But skin moulds new bodies, as well as facilitating exchanges. For example, skin grafting techniques of the First and Second World Wars were repurposed in the 1960s through the development of cosmetic surgery. Skin also contributes to gender construction and reconstruction: in 1959, Agnes was diagnosed with a ‘genuine case of hermaphroditism’: her penis and testicles were amputated and a vagina was fashioned, using the skin of her scrotum (p. 381). For Preciado, Agnes represents the capacity of ‘genuine [...] hermaphroditism’ surgery to establish linear relationships between sexuality, sex and gender, and affirms that bodies and skin express a ‘legible and referential inscription about the truth of sex’ (p. 381). In comparison, Preciado writes that when he was seven, he

dreamed of travelling from Spain to Sweden to have a penis grafted onto his body. He also delights in the skin inside his mouth thickening when he takes testosterone. In *Manifiesto Contrasexual*, Preciado covers his sketch of the body with drawings of penises, urging readers to imagine a reconfiguration of the body's organs (2016). When he takes testosterone, he imagines his tongue to be a hard and penetrative sexual organ; he also notes that each leg contains a potentially erectile vein: 'there is a penis in each arm'. Here, Preciado refers to the construction of a prosthetic penis through the 'suitcase handle' operation, which Preciado describes in detail, referring to a series of photos published by Dr Wolf Eicher in 1984 (p. 409).

Eicher writes that his patients have all found 'mental stability' thanks to the operation; but Preciado counters: 'I don't want mental stability; I just want the cock of the century' (p. 410). Measuring his arm, he daydreams, 'I can already imagine myself with at least a 10 ½ inch cock, in the worst of cases, 8 ½ inches' (p. 410). He acknowledges that medical institutions avoid the 'production of any kind of luxury cock', but gleefully adds: 'thinking about it makes me come' (p. 410). *Testo Junkie* imaginatively theorises the disruption of perceived linear relationships between sex and gender, and bodies and identities: each arm is a (potential) arm-penis, each tongue a (potential) penetrative sexual organ. Preciado playfully deterritorialises the body, organ by organ, creating new sexual 'zones d'intensité', described by Deleuze and Guattari (1980, p. 26).

*Testo Junkie's* description of Agnes, in comparison with his own 'luxury cock' describes the exchange of territorialisation and perceived deterritorialisation; but here, perhaps, Preciado lapses into glorifying visible and stable skin, in contrast with its permeable attributes (p. 410). His imagined production of a designer penis, and his comparison of his tongue with a penis, represent reterritorialization by an economy of 'presence', in comparison with the skin's limitless capacity for transfers and exchanges. Preciado refers to Agnes's surgery as disappointingly 'legible', establishing linear relationships between sex, gender and identity, but his 'cock of the century' is equally referential (pp. 381; 410).

Women are also, again, tied to this economy of presence in relation to skin – as pharmacopornographic sex workers. Preciado describes a process of 'feminisation': his partner takes him to a hotel in Bretagne, where they 'spend a week in bathrobes and plastic sandals, soaking in baths of algae, floating in iodized and bioenergized Jacuzzis, eating oysters while reading Le Figaro (the French right-wing newspaper being the only paper available), and fucking' (pp. 322-323) But, more significantly, he writes: 'for the first time in my life, I agree to have a manicure' (p. 323). He observes the other clients 'with

contempt', they seem 'terribly short on style, intelligence' and subdues a rising 'wave of anguish' in response to this 'gender hedonism' (p. 323). But when his manicure begins, with the stroking and massaging of his wrist and forearm, he admits in wonder: 'the experience is completely lesbian [...] she is aware of handling one of my sexual organs; all the cis-females sitting in the waiting room and reading Vogue know very well why they're here and what they've come to do' (p. 324). His contempt becomes admiration: 'they're the masked agents of a secret brigade devoted to female pleasure': Preciado describes his manicure as a 'countersexual hand job' (p. 324). Ultimately, he concludes that 'the work of taking care of bodies in our society has fallen to women': more specifically, 'they take care of the skin of the world' (p. 325). For Preciado, although skin is genderless, sexless and capable of regeneration, skin care is a strictly female pursuit. 'Using' skin, and manipulating its limits and borders for the purpose of body transgression (even in the case of Preciado's 'luxury cock', within the economy of presence and penetration) is reserved for men and trans men (p. 410). For women in pharmacopornography, skin represents stable sex work and care, rather than transgression or permeability.

Preciado's oscillation between permeable skin and 'potential cock' skin evokes Blanchot's description of prison walls: he describes how they separate prisoners, but also 'servent à transmettre les signaux, le langage des prisons', like tapping, banging and knocking (2003, p. 171). For Preciado, skin is always both disciplinary, referring to an economy of penetration and presence, and pharmacopornographic – permeable and networked. Crucially, it can be reconceptualised and re-functionalised. Preciado also uses the porous prison cell to describe his testo-project: 'the administration of testosterone [...] has become an escape, a prison, a paradise' (p. 396). In *Testo Junkie*, both skin and the action of applying Testogel are capable of imprisoning and liberating, of separation and communication.

Skin both traps Preciado in a Hairy Arm prison of luxury cocks, and allows the permeable transmission of signals. In dialogue with Blanchot, Shaviro wonders, 'What would happen if these prison walls were to come tumbling down? Could either of us endure a nakedness so extreme? [...] The exquisite pain of nerve endings in immediate contact. There lies the whole problem of communication, does it not? What goes in, what comes out, what gets transmitted across the membrane?' (1997, p. 8). 'Extreme' nakedness, and the raw pain of exposed nerve endings symbolises vulnerability – explored earlier in relation to Dustan and death. In comparison, Preciado's valorisation of skin represents protection of permeability and an avoidance of exposure and vulnerability. Preciado writes of his partner:

‘she tears off my skin, every time’, and of Dustan, ‘you were [...] complaining that ACT UP wanted your hide, that they’d decided to skin you alive and that one day you were going to give them what they wanted, your hide’ (p. 419). He evokes Shaviro’s description of skinned bodies, and the ‘extreme’ nakedness of exposed nerve endings. Here, for Preciado, both addictive love and conflict are expressed as flaying – which, in turn, represents forced vulnerability and unwanted exposure.

In *Angels in America*, Kushner expresses change through exposure, vulnerability and pain: Harper, high on prescription medication, demands of a waxwork Mormon mother: ‘In your experience of the world. How do people change?’ The mother replies that ‘it’s not very nice’: ‘God splits the skin with a jagged thumbnail from throat to belly and then plunges a huge filthy hand in, he grabs hold of your bloody tubes and they slip to evade his grasp, but he squeezes hard, he insists, he pulls and pulls till all your innards are yanked out and the pain! And then he stuffs them back, dirty, tangled and torn. It’s up to you to do the stitching’ (1993, p. 93). Harper wonders: ‘And then up you get. And walk around’, the mother replies: ‘Just mangled guts pretending’, and Harper affirms: ‘That’s how people change’ – the repeated last line echoing the nursery rhyme, ‘What are little girls made of?’ (p. 93). Here, change implies a prolonged, painful struggle: the splitting of skin, followed by an uncomfortable rearrangement of organs, and stitching – skin care, here performed by women, doing the work of their own subjectification and re-subjectification.

In comparison, Testogel rubbed in skin effects intangible mutation, and describes slippery, often invisible, means of transformation. Perhaps Kushner’s description of change refers to the public vulnerability of bodies during the AIDS epidemic – the context of *Angels in America*. His description also invokes resistance: the ‘bloody tubes’ ‘slip to evade his grasp’ (p. 93). In comparison, Preciado advocates revolution-by-immersion, ultimately rejecting (although engaging with) the queer politics of AIDS and Dustan, linked with vulnerability, death and pain, in favour of permeability. This permeability is complicit, rather than relational – as examined above. Benjamin Noys expresses this complicity as identification: he writes that Preciado’s testo-project is about ‘identification and immersion with these new forms of power’, rather than ‘escape’ (2013).

Ultimately, for Preciado, his skin represents *both* ‘the limits that confine me to myself’, in Shaviro’s words, and the possibility of transformation (p. 84). *Testo Junkie* is concerned with navigating the skin’s potential for communication and exchange: ‘what goes in, what comes out’ (Shaviro 1997, p. 84). He writes: ‘my body could be a lifelong center of imprisonment [...] an avatar of pharmacopower with my name attached to it. My body,

my cells are a political appliance par excellence, a public-private space of surveillance and activation' (p. 135). Significantly, he writes 'my body *could be*' (p. 135, my italics). His body is also capable of 'activation' – perhaps representative of biodrag (p. 135). And biodrag is applied to the skin: the moustache Preciado wears is attached above his lip – part of his Dustan-drag; Testogel is smoothed into his arm – the 'bio' of biodrag. Skin is concerned with 'what goes in, what comes out': Testogel and drag permeate the skin; queered, trans-masculinity 'comes out' (Shaviro 1997, p. 84). Skin is also prosthetic, representative of prosthetic masculinity and femininity: skin can be removed, and moulded into different shapes and bodies. Preciado's descriptions of skinned bodies reveal a fear of vulnerability, and, crucially, a loss of permeability.

In Sarah Kay's article on medieval flaying and skin, she writes of the fantasy that preserving the 'skin whole' means the 'continuation of existence' (2006, p. 36). Here, the preservation of the skin is associated with futurity. She writes that flaying was historically used to 'obliterate what was foreign', which suggests that 'identity can be located in one's skin, an assumption familiar to modern students of race' (p. 41). Kay's analysis of skin and medieval flaying asserts the stability of skin, and its function as sovereign-identity-container. In comparison, for Preciado, the preservation of skin allows for the possible dissolution of stable identity – through its inherent permeability. For Kay, skin is protective: an 'inadequately formed skin Ego' is 'subject to seepage, full of holes, or a source of pain or sexual excitement when it should be protective' (p. 58). For Preciado, skin is porous and always 'subject to seepage' (p. 58). But Kay also describes layers of skin as texts: she describes a scene in *Ysengrimus*, a fable written in 1148 or 1149, in which Ysengrimus is flayed, and the animals peeling his skin describe the process as 'reading', 'as though aware that Ysengrimus is never more than a literary creation, these different layers of skin or clothing are also identified as texts' (p. 45). Equally, Preciado describes the body as a 'biopolitical archive' and a 'techno-living cultural archive' (pp. 395; 389). For both Kay and Preciado, skin is constructive, and productive of politics and identity; skin is legible and can be written. For Preciado, skin can also be rewritten – through biodrag.

## **Conclusion**

'The Sex Worker' examined the limits of 'fuck you yourself'; 'The Biodrag King' explores another directive: 'Knowing yourself by yourself means poisoning yourself by yourself, risking self-mutation' (p. 361). 'Fuck you yourself' was defined through penetration;

‘poisoning yourself by yourself’ is defined through permeation (p. 361). But ‘Fuck you yourself’ and ‘knowing yourself by yourself’ also require multiple subjectification: you can only ‘fuck yourself’ or ‘know yourself’ by yourself if there are at least two selves. ‘Knowing yourself by yourself’ and ‘fuck you yourself’ describe an ideological house of mirrors: the multiplicity of representation is central – it acts to mask, or effects the ‘crumbling’ of, the ‘real’ body or identity (p. 83). But this multiple subjectification is explored through drag kings and queered masculinity: cis and trans women are, again, absent in Preciado’s elaboration of resistant-permeability. Equally, skin is resistant in the context of synthetic testosterone and prosthetic masculinity, but women’s work is restricted to ‘skin care’ (p. 325).

Ultimately biodrag is theorised through Preciado’s relationship with Dustan. Evans writes that Preciado ‘chooses [...] notions of futurity and community contained within her (sic) reference(s) to revolution’ (2015, p. 128) But Preciado’s embrace of queer futurity is defined through a rejection of biological reproduction, which represents his theoretical and bodily engagement with Dustan. Evans writes that Preciado rejects death and Dustan: ‘she cannot carry on his line in the sense that she cannot accept his ideas and, materially, she cannot take on his serostatus. To continue his political lineage would be to sacrifice herself, to accept death’ (p. 136). But although Preciado does reject Dustan’s perceived ‘queer politics of death’, he also writes of his first testosterone application: ‘*Do you in drag*’ (p. 19). Preciado emphasises his biodrag performance of Dustan: he stages grief-drag – a process of mourning, viral-drag – embodying the structure of a virus, and Hairy-Arm Drag – a performance of masculine subjectification. For Preciado, biodrag is his re-functionalised second skin: symbolic of Dustan, but facilitating both engagement with, and protection from, a queer politics associated with death.

Biodrag illuminates a difference between Dustan and Preciado: between vulnerability and permeability. Preciado presents his permeable, intangible body in opposition to Dustan’s vulnerable body. But Dustan’s death provides the skin, or boundary, through which Preciado develops a theory of permeability defined by both pleasure and toxicity. As noted above, Evans writes that Preciado ‘seeks to harness the urgency of anti-AIDS activism during the late 1980s, a time when the vulnerability of bodies was all too evident’ (2015, p. 196). Vulnerability was ‘too evident’: thus, for Preciado, permeability is protective, as well as productive of new body-fictions. Permeability gestures towards Muñozian queer futures; in comparison vulnerability etymologically describes a wound that concludes at the point of contact, thus finality. Permeability also describes exchanges – like

testosterone passing through skin, which simultaneously facilitates the permeation of queer politics. But permeability also requires vulnerability: Preciado harnesses and uses the vulnerability to variation inherent in repetition and performativity. Thus, permeability expresses complicity, as well as vulnerability: his politics is constructed inside existing performative structures.

Thus: biodrag distinguishes vulnerability from permeability: vulnerability expresses tangibility – the pain of transformation, grief, and death; permeability is ‘subject fiction in a flash’, expressing the possible speed and virality of pharmacological mutation and absorption (p. 367). Permeability eschews transcendence, resistance and relationality in favour of complicity and immersion – in testosterone, bodies and drag. Vulnerability is raw, composed of exposed nerve endings; in contrast, permeability is characterised by perpetual exchanges – of theories, drugs and bodies. Biodrag provides Preciado with, as he writes, a ‘second skin’, and enables the permeation of queer rhetoric and queer politics (p. 366). In *Testo Junkie*, queer politics is defined by its capacity for bodily permeation: if the pharmacopornographic era, thus pharmacopornographic subjectivity, demands complicity, Preciado demonstrates how complicity can be made material, imbibed and queered.

## The Junkie

‘I’m talking about an architecture. Not a revelation’ (*Testo Junkie* 2013, p. 254).

This chapter explores another character produced through Preciado’s writing: ‘The Junkie’. ‘The Junkie’ examines addiction in *Testo Junkie* as a desperate desire for dependence, the architecture of pharmacopornography, and as part of a rhythm explored in ‘The Sex Worker’: ‘excitation-frustration-excitation’ (p. 40). The chapter also theorises addiction as ‘action’ gambling and analyses Preciado’s attachment to an interpretation of risk embedded in contemporary masculinity. The chapter explores addiction as the manufacturing of certainty, and, conversely, examines the disruptive structure of the text, and its framing of the reader as an addicted voyeur. For Preciado, addiction is embedded in the structure of pharmacopornography: our collective addictions to gender fictions, drugs and pornography generate capital. Preciado titles his text and describes himself through the term ‘junkie’ specifically associating himself with users of illegal drugs. He identifies with the junkie’s status: distanced from medical and social regulatory practices associated with gender transitioning.

But for William Burroughs, the junkie is the epitome of a subject without agency: he writes that ‘junk is the ideal product’ because ‘the junk merchant does not sell his product to the consumer, he sells the consumer to his product’ (*Naked Lunch* 1962, p. 3). Timothy Melley notes that this passage evokes the ‘reversal of human agency’ in Marx’s writing on commodity fetishism: ‘junk merchants are instruments of their powerful commodity and junkies are merely objects to be sold’ (2002, p. 43). Here, junk is both useless and productive – of junkie subjectivities. Melley writes that ‘in Burroughs’s world, junk produces a terminal capitalist subject, a ‘grotesque’ consumer whose needs and desires have all been replaced by one simple but overpowering bodily need’ (p. 43). Or as Burroughs writes: ‘Life telescopes down to junk, one fix and looking forward to the next’ (1977, p. 22). For Preciado, the ‘junkie’ is distanced from medicalised gender transitioning: he describes gleefully how Testogel can be passed from skin to skin, ‘how can such trafficking [...] be controlled, surveyed’ (p. 65). But the junkie is also Burroughs’s ‘terminal capitalist subject’, desirous of ‘more, always more’ pharmacopornographic power: the body is ‘desiring power, seeking to swallow it, eat it, administer it wolf it down, more, always more, through every hold, by every possible route of application. Turning oneself into power’ (pp. 43; 208). Preciado

describes a ‘telescoped’ body addiction: ‘one fix and looking forward to the next’, in Burroughs’s phrasing; the body is transfixed by its capacity to absorb power (p. 22).

Preciado’s framing of the junkie as both illegal gender-hacker and power-hungry pharmacopornographic subject perhaps, again, reflects his separation of the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes – despite their inevitable cooperation. For Preciado, medical (‘state’) interventions in support of gender transitioning represent disciplinary power; in comparison, the ‘more, always more’ subject is pharmacopornographic – embedded in contemporary capitalist power and its entreaty to consume. Preciado’s description of ‘trafficking’ Testogel represents an assertion of will in relation to disciplinary power, whereas the body ‘desiring power’ describes a different matrix (pp. 65; 208). The body is absorbed in the process of ‘turning oneself into power’, and becoming the matrix of pharmacopornography (p. 65). Preciado’s rejection of disciplinary power through ‘trafficking’ represents how older forms of power function through opposition and resistance. In contrast, Preciado’s embrace of Testogel represents his illustration of the dominance of pharmacopornography. But, ultimately, he is both a resistant junkie – evading medical regulation, and a pharmacopornographic junkie – a ‘body desiring power’ – epitomising the internal collaboration, or cooperation, between the pharmacopornographic and disciplinary regimes (p. 208).

Preciado’s use of ‘junkie’ also aligns with contemporary understandings of addiction as a flexible disposition, rather than a disease. In 1975, Stanton Peele wrote that addiction was not ‘as we like to think, an aberration from our way of life. Addiction is our way of life’ (1975, p. 182). His primary text, *Love and Addiction* notes that ‘addiction is not a special reaction to a drug, but a primary and universal form of motivation [...] there are addictive [...] ways of doing anything’ (1975, p. 59). Here, Peele makes clear that addiction represents negative habit formation. Preciado’s title, *Testo Junkie*, similarly makes clear our capacity to become addicted to anything: addiction, as a ‘way of life’, structures pharmacopornography (p. 59). Peele’s assertion that there are addictive ways of ‘doing anything’ frames addiction as a *pharmakon*: addiction is a general disposition, and our tendencies toward addiction can be directed and re-directed, but our fundamental disposition is inalterable (p. 59). Equally, this chapter illustrates how addiction allows for control, but limited control – of direction, rather than movement, following the *pharmakon*. As Joshua Rivas writes: we are ‘always already intoxicated in the pharmacopornographic era *Testo Junkie* seems to prescribe only one option: to pick your poison’ (2016, p. 159).

## Love and Addiction

Preciado's addiction to testosterone is established immediately: *Testo Junkie*. But, for Preciado, love is equally addictive: he describes addiction to testosterone as synonymous in structure with his romantic and sexual relationship with Virginie Despentes. Preciado describes his affinity with addiction through his relationships with both testosterone and Despentes: 'Dependent on Despentes. My relationship with T could be defined in this way: T-dependent [...] It becomes obvious that my relationship with V belongs to the type of co-dependency categorized under the sign of addiction' (p. 251). For Preciado, his relationships with both testosterone and Despentes primarily conform to an addiction model because satisfaction is elusive: 'when I'm kissing her, I think I want to kiss her [...] when my body absorbs it, I think it want to absorb it, more and more' (p. 251). He writes that kissing Despentes and absorbing Testogel merely produce a stronger desire for 'more', the 'necessity' of more: 'I desire to continue desiring, without any possibility of satiation' (p. 252). Addiction to testosterone and love are framed through expansion and accumulation: mapping onto pharmacopornographic capitalism's growth imperative. This addictive desire also fits the pornographic rhythm described in 'The Sex Worker': the cycle of excitation-frustration-excitation, which denies satisfaction in order to produce more pleasure and capital (p. 40).

For Preciado, falling in love also represents an *interruptive* addiction:

I devote all my time to organizing what I think is an impending pansexual revolution: the crumbling of sexual identity into a multiplicity of desires, practices, and aesthetics, the invention of new molecular sensibilities, new forms of collective living . . . All of it seems possible, real, and inevitable at the time (p. 83).

But he follows this with a satirical rejoinder: 'And it was my body, a biopower prosthesis, a microexcitable platform of resistance that fell in love. This is how it happened' (p. 82). Preciado engages in frustrated self-mockery and reminds the reader of his culturally-inevitable attraction to traditional narratives ('this is how it happened', the romantic backstory), socialised awakenings ('fell in love') and bodies (Despentes is a fleshy body rather than a 'microexcitable platform') (p. 82). He then describes when he first met Despentes and how he fell in love with her: love and addiction are framed as romantically

inevitable, and act as a brake, halting his ‘crumbling’ of identities, and his organisation of a pansexual revolution (p. 83).

Here, his love for Despentés is opposed to the deconstruction of sexual identities: in place of ‘crumbling’ identities, his love and addiction are processes of subjectification (p. 83). In an article on addiction and love, Diane Davis writes that ‘‘identifying’ scans as a certain type of drugging, of being-on-something’; she adds that identifications are ‘structurally imperative [...] they respond to an ordinarily addictive dis/position, and their effects are utterly dependent on dosage and mixture’ (1999, p. 636). Thus, both identification and addiction operate according to dosage, following the *pharmakon*.

Crucially, Preciado’s addiction to Despentés also becomes identification with an addicted subjectivity: ‘The Junkie’, a character as intoxicating as Despentés or Testogel. Davis references Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, in which he writes that ‘addiction is always addicted to itself, first’: ‘What one is addicted ‘towards’ is to *let oneself be drawn* by the sort of thing for which the addiction hankers’ (p. 636). The causative impulse is ‘being drawn’, rather than hankering. Preciado writes of his identification with Testogel and techno-masculinity, and his love for Despentés, but he also describes his hankering to *be drawn*, this originary addictive feeling: ‘I would have liked to have fallen into a dependence, have the security of permanently and chemically clinging to something’ (p. 247). He adds his hope that testosterone will be the substance that he can cling to. Thus, for Preciado, addiction to addiction is primary. Preciado also writes that he wants to be ‘attached’, ‘not to a subjectivity’, but the change initiated by ingesting a substance ‘without will’ (p. 247). His immersion in pharmacopornography, which requires bodily complicity, fulfils his requirement for substance ingestion ‘without will’; but his identification with addiction also represents an attachment to addictive subjectification, and becoming the ‘testo junkie’ of his title (p. 247).

Ultimately, for Preciado, his addictions to Despentés and Testogel make clear the ‘political trap’ of subjectification (p. 257). He must choose between ‘‘two psychoses’ or subjectivities: gender identity disorder, for which testosterone is a ‘medicine’; and addiction, in which testosterone becomes the addictive substance which must be substituted or treated (p. 257). Preciado describes how bodies ‘drift gradually toward pathology’ when they abandon culturally inscribed gender norms: ‘either I declare myself to be a transsexual, or I declare myself to be drugged and psychotic’ (p. 256). Preciado associates declaring gender identity disorder with the need to rewrite his past: ‘I’ll have to employ a series of extremely calculated falsehoods: I’ve always hated Barbie dolls, I’m repulsed by my breasts and my

vagina, vaginal penetration makes me sick, and the only way I can have an orgasm is with a dildo' (p. 257). Thus, his addiction to testosterone requires his commitment to a junkie-subjectivity, to being stuck with a pathologised identity, rather than organising the 'crumbling' of 'desires and practices' associated with a 'pansexual revolution' (p. 83).

His love-addiction is equally framed through being stuck, or trapped. Jean-Luc Nancy writes of love as self-exposure, and exposure to Otherness: he describes intoxication with the 'venir-et-partir incessant' of love and Otherness (1991, p. 98). In comparison with Nancy's description, Preciado's experience of love is characterised by an inability to 'come and go', or to move freely (p. 98). Preciado writes that the 'secret of addiction reveals its arithmetic': 'The moment we end up in one of these gelatinous lower depths, getting out is as difficult for her as it is for me [...] when it comes down to it, there are no levels, because the bottom is just that: the bottom' (pp. 254-255). He writes of feeling 'imprisoned' and realising that 'the transubstantiation of affect won't happen today' (p. 255). His movements are limited to 'solidifying liquefied feelings to get a foothold, or evaporating them so you can breathe' (p. 255). Here, addiction, rather than representing incessant coming and going, is described through the figures of Preciado and Despentés, trapped in aspic. Nancy's description of the flow and constant motion of love and Otherness is contrasted with Preciado's inability to extricate himself from the gelatinous depths of addiction. Preciado writes that 'in' addiction, there is 'neither light nor oxygen, no means of respiration, no possibility of finding any optical or pulmonary satisfaction. It's a question of diameter, texture, and fluidity' (p. 254). When he writes 'there are no levels', he refutes the romantic perception of love-as-transcendence, as an experience of self-exposure, and exposure to otherness (p. 254). Love is addiction, and addiction affixes us to subjectivities, rather than allowing for 'venir-et-partir' (p. 98). This process is, Preciado writes, 'without will' (p. 247). Love is also a viscous addiction, following Sartre, which I explore below: 'il s'accroche comme une sangsue' (1943, pp. 652-657).

Falling in love with Despentés and Testogel simultaneously makes clear the structure of addiction and its relationship with pharmacopornography. As the section below explores, addiction appears to adhere to the pornographic rhythm of excitation-frustration-excitation. Preciado writes that his relationship with Despentés operates on his body in the same way that Testogel is absorbed by his skin: they both produce the desire for 'more', which emphasises the centrality of desire and addiction in pharmacopornographic economies (p. 208). Addiction cements subjectivities and traps 'junkies' in gelatinous 'depths' (p. 253). But Preciado embraces this addicted subjectivity when he chooses 'junkie', rather than

gender disorder. For Preciado, admitting a gender identity disorder involves allowing the ‘medical establishment’ to ‘believe that it can offer a satisfying cure’ (p. 256). In comparison, addiction is represented through the impossibility of satiation. His status as a ‘testo junkie’ represents his enmeshment with the pharmacopornographic regime he describes. In *Testo Junkie*, love is structurally synonymous with addiction: it acts as a brake, or forms a gelatinous mould – trapping him, and restricting his movement. If biodrag represents acceleration and proliferation of queerness, love and addiction represent their deceleration. Preciado loves Despentés, but also frames his love as a ‘weakness’, which can ‘attack at any moment’: love is both ‘fragile’ and leads to disappointing ‘somatic (bodily) certainty’ (p. 96).

### **Pornography and Addiction**

Described above, Preciado defines addiction through elusive satiation: addiction is gluttonous and pornographic. Preciado describes the pornographic rhythm as excitation-frustration-excitation: satisfaction is perpetually, necessarily, elusive, in order to engender more frustration and more excitation. Addiction produces the feeling of desiring to continue desiring, ‘without any possibility of satiation’. *Testo Junkie*’s format, wildly weaving narrative and theory, mirrors this structure of addiction: Preciado embeds the pornographic rhythm of addiction in his text. He also describes addiction in terms of architectural frustration: ‘there is a dissymmetrical relationship between the ingestion of, or the presence of, the object of desire and satisfaction [...] because that satisfaction takes the form of withdrawal. Right where satisfaction is supposed to take place, frustration emerges. I’m talking about an architecture. Not a revelation’ (p. 254). ‘Not a revelation’ echoes Derrida’s ‘quand le ciel transcendant vient à se dépeupler [...] une sorte rhétorique que fatal supplée cette vacance, et c’est le fétichisme toxicomaniaque’ (1989). Ultimately, Preciado describes frustration as architectural: the pornographic rhythm of addiction is structural, representing *Testo Junkie*’s textual edifice.

For example, *Testo Junkie*’s fifth chapter describes a sex scene with Despentés, which is interspersed with theory: ‘She sucks them, without taking her hand off my body’ is succeeded by, ‘Pleasure follows this arrangement of forces, this hierarchy of functions whose stability is necessarily precarious’ (p. 98), which, in turn, is followed by, ‘We go on like that until I come in her hand’ (p. 98). The chapter, ‘Technogender’ concludes with an analysis of ‘pharmacopornographic emancipation’ through biodrag (p. 129); the following

chapter, 'Becoming T', begins with: 'Victor, the lover I left for VD, has been working for six months for a phone sex line [...] we fuck each other all day' (p. 130). 'Pornpower' ends with a description of the production of pleasure and 'excitation-frustration' in the 'technoliving body' and its 'implementation on a global scale' (p. 317); the next chapter 'Jimi and Me' (Jimi is Preciado's black dildo) opens with, 'The new year. I get stoned. In every way possible [...] the first time she fucked me with my own dildo-harness, she made me come as if I were a schoolgirl' (p. 318). 'Jimi and Me' ends with a sex scene, 'digging a hole in her body [...] the power I extract from her sex' (p. 332). The following chapter is titled: 'The Micropolitics of Gender in the Pharmacopornographic Era: Experimentation, Voluntary Intoxication, Mutation' and is prefaced with a Haraway quote (p. 333). Equally, a chapter titled, 'Testogel' concludes with: 'It's enough to bring it near my skin and its mere proximity to the body causes it to disappear into and become diluted into my blood' (p. 67). The following chapter, 'History of Technosexuality', opens with: 'the discontinuity of history body power: Foucault describes the transformation of European society...' (p. 68).

In an interview in *The Paris Review*, Preciado describes writing as a 'performative device' and references its 'performative dimension' (2013). This performative dimension is both pornographic and addictive: pornographic and addictive rhythms share the same galvanising impulses – to excite, and to limit the grip of excitation, in order to produce more excitation. At the beginning of *Testo Junkie*, Preciado acknowledges that he behaves 'as if I were an addict of an illegal substance': 'I hide, keep an eye on myself, censure myself, exercise restraint' (p. 56). The abrupt transitions into theory from scenes depicting Testogel applications or sex with Despentés, or from theory into sex and testosterone, perhaps also exemplify Preciado's alternating exercise of restraint, and lapse into addiction. These transitions also represent the 'play' described in 'The Voyeur' – which generates pleasure through the movement from one extreme to another. These transitions can be framed through the excitation-frustration-excitation rhythm characteristic of pornography.

This pornographic play necessarily involves the reader: Preciado's pornographic imperative 'fuck you yourself' imbues *Testo Junkie* with teasing textuality (p. 265). Preciado has described pornography as a disciplinary technique designed to keep 'potentially excited or excitable bodies under control' (2009, p. 27). *Testo Junkie*'s textual 'play', between sex, testosterone and theory could thus perhaps be described as a form of discipline, or exhorted self-discipline. If the text structure is imbued with pornographic/addictive rhythms, Preciado's description of pornographic control also applies to *Testo Junkie*. Preciado writes that pornography establishes a relationship between 'pleasure and surveillance', and

between 'space and vision', 'publicity and privacy' (p. 25). Through weaving sex scenes with theory, Preciado makes visible our pornographic/addictive attachment to the 'play' between public and private, outside and inside.

Thus, the pornographic rhythm establishes the reader as a sex worker: addicted, pornographic and subject to the excitation-frustration rhythm. In 'The Sex Worker', I described Preciado's frustration with the dictum, 'fuck you yourself', and the implied necessity of playing the roles of both master and subject (p. 265). Through embedding addictive, pornographic rhythms in *Testo Junkie's* structure, Preciado embraces the master/slave double-act. Here, Preciado displays his subjugation to love and testosterone, while shaping the narrative-as-disciplinary-technique to engender a relationship with the reader which alternates between pleasure and frustration.

Rivas acknowledges the pornographic, addictive textuality of *Testo Junkie* in *Literature and Intoxication: Writing Politics and the Experience of Excess*: he writes that Preciado's 'intensely personal autotheory effectively functions itself as an instrument of pharmacopornographic power' (2016). Preciado posits that excitation is the galvanising impulse of the pornographic rhythm and pharmacopornographic control. Thus, Rivas writes that interspersing 'explicit' sexual narratives with theoretical prose can be read as a 'wilfully pornographic move': 'in effect, Preciado mimetically reappropriates the forces of somatopower through the arousal-intoxication of her excitable reader in the service of her theoretical project' (2016). For Rivas, the 'explicit autobiographical narration', or sex scenes, represent pornographic control (2016).

But Preciado's theoretical chapters also form part of this pornographic/addictive rhythm: they provide the frustration inherent in the frustration-excitation-frustration cycle. Rivas writes that the theoretical and narrative threads of the book 'function in much the same way' through arousal-intoxication, but, arguably, each thread functions differently, precisely *in order* to function as pornographic/addictive through the alternating cycle of excitation-frustration-excitation (2016). Preciado's textuality displays pornographic control, but also *Playboy's* 'play': the reader's visual and imaginative control of narrative based on the 'play' between binaries. The reader, through flipping pages, obliges its characters to dress and undress, and plays between inside and outside, public and private. Thus, the narrative and theoretical threads function differently, as described above, teasingly, and this 'play' produces pleasure and the sensation of control. Simultaneously, Preciado demonstrates the power of addictive/pornographic rhythms, and their reliance on the tension between excitation and frustration, and the play between them. The theoretical and narrative sections

of *Testo Junkie* necessarily function differently in order to expose their structural co-operation.

Perhaps the simultaneous separation and collaboration between theory and narrative also epitomises Preciado's theorisation of the relationship between the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes. In my earlier chapter on sex work, I described the cooperation between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic forms of power. Theory and narrative function similarly, here: they frustrate each other, co-operate with each other and bleed into each other. The relationship between theory and narrative in *Testo Junkie*, equivalent to the relationship between disciplinary and pharmacopornographic power, serves to remind the reader of the simultaneous stability and instability of binaries, our attachment to them and our investment in them. Crucially, Preciado embeds in his text the 'play' or pleasure produced by the tension between them. Ultimately, *Testo Junkie* is performative: the text epitomises performativity's repetition of culturally dominant binaries; following Butler, its performativity also reminds us of the possible variation inherent in repetition.

### **Complicity and Addiction**

Thus, *Testo Junkie* is performative, embedding the structures of pornography and addiction in its text. Crucially, its rhythms implicate the reader: the text requires our complicity. Described above, the often abrupt segues from sex into theory alert the reader to *Testo Junkie*'s textuality, and our complicity. Preciado describes this desired complicity when he writes: 'I'm not going to claim that I'm like you [...] my ambition is to convince you that you are like me [...] you have it in you' (p. 398). Sade also required the reader's entanglement, interspersing sex and rape scenes with theory, baldly laying bare our confusion and complicity: 'Et qu'importe? répondit le barbare; encore une fois, sommes-nous les maîtres de nos goûts? [...] Si la nature était offensée de ces goûts, elle ne nous les inspirerait pas' (2012, p. 261). Marcel Henaff writes 'Lire, c'est déjà conspirer', which Will McMorran believes to be the 'fundamental ethical problem' of Sade: 'how can we read the scenes of sexual violence without in some way becoming accomplices or accessories to the author' (2014). Equally, *Testo Junkie*'s textuality exhorts its readers to conspire with Preciado: to become a gender-hacker, and acknowledge our vulnerability to pornographic and addictive rhythms embedded in pharmacopornographic power. *Testo Junkie* requires an admission of our shared affinity for chemical and sexual highs and narratives.

Our potential complicity is emphasised at the end of the fifth chapter of *Testo Junkie*. I described this scene above in the context of how narrative and theory operate together, pornographically. Here, I analyse how the reader responds to their elision: ‘When I wake up later, her hand is inside me [...] I push two fingers in her mouth, she sucks them without taking her hand off my body [...] we go on like that until I come in her hand, until my hand comes in her mouth’ (p. 98). Immediately following, the next chapter begins: ‘The invention of the category *gender* signalled a splitting off and became the source point for the emergence of the pharmacopornographic regime for producing and governing sexuality’ (p. 99). The juxtaposition of ‘until I come in her hand’ with ‘the invention of the category *gender*’ is playful and deliberate (pp. 98; 99). Preciado and Despentés climax; the reader is subject to the addictive, pornographic rhythm of excitation-frustration. Ultimately, our stake in the text is revealed: the reader’s body follows the rhythms of the text, performing its narrative peaks and troughs. As Carolyn Stack writes, of the text: ‘Plunged into the meticulous preparation and frenzied pace of *Testo Junkie*, I too penetrate the skin: I am gel coldly disintegrating into the epidermis, into subcutaneous tissue, close now to blood vessels, nerve endings, glands. Later, I am fluid, sucked into the needle, plunged into a vein’ (2016, p. 19). *Testo Junkie* encourages fluid identification with the text: Stack, as a reader, mutates from skin to gel, entering the text-as-body.

In her 1999 introduction to a later edition of *Hard Core*, Linda Williams writes that she often wonders about her own vulnerability to her subject: pornography, and its place in her texts (1999, p. 57). Williams references Haraway’s suggestion not to ‘do’ cultural studies of ‘objects to which one is not vulnerable’ (p. 57). This later introduction acknowledges that she ‘increasingly suspects that indifference is fruitless’ and that admissions of interest and vulnerability are ‘preferable’; Williams writes, ‘I thus hereby admit, retrospectively [...] a genuinely prurient interest in the genre’ that is ‘not quite owned up to’ in her first edition (p. 57). *Testo Junkie*’s readers must be subject to a similar ‘vulnerability’ test: we must admit our stake in Preciado’s narrative, and our shared prurience. Critiquing Preciado’s complicity with pharmacopornography necessitates the admission of our own complicity, as readers, and as similarly embedded in pharmacopornographic power. As Sara Ahmed recently tweeted, in frustration: ‘Giving a critique of complicity does not mean you are not complicit. Giving a critique of complicity can create an impression of not being complicit. Giving a critique of complicity can be how complicity is concealed. A critique of complicity can be complicity’ (2018).

Preciado addresses *Testo Junkie* to Dustan: he opens the text with: ‘you’re the only one who could read this book’; ‘your seminars’, ‘your books’, ‘your body’, ‘your mind’, ‘your death’ suffuse the text, achieving the effect of eliding the reader with Dustan (pp. 19; 85; 15; 10). ‘Your body’ is teasingly ambiguous. Preciado’s narrative moves from ‘you’re the only one who could read this book’ to ‘I now need only to convince you, all of you, that you are like me’ (pp. 19; 398). ‘You’ expands here, clearly encompassing the reader for the first time, and acknowledging the ‘play’ between ‘you (Dustan)’ and ‘you (reader)’ through his addition of ‘all of you’ (p. 398). Preciado also directly references readers of Dustan’s novels at the end of the text: ‘where are your readers? Where are all those who masturbated while reading you? Why aren’t they here, come to masturbate one last time with you? Cowards’ (p. 426). Thus, Preciado acknowledges his readership and their textual position, and his need to convince them. Preciado’s reference to Dustan’s masturbating readers also acknowledges the possibility that his own readers are physically, sexually engaged with his text. Preciado’s address to his readers, and his possible admission of their physical involvement with his text, and his challenge to Dustan’s readers, serve to emphasise our complicity, and our shared addictive disposition: ‘you, all of you [...] are like me’ (p. 398). Preciado’s description of masturbation and reading also epitomises the collaboration between the pharmaco and pornographic regimes of power: Dustan’s readers, and possibly Preciado’s, are reading about someone taking drugs and masturbating. This conjunction makes visible the reader’s addictive and pornographic, or pharmacopornographic, subjectivity.

The continuity of masturbation and reading also expresses the shared Derridean function of writing and masturbation: the supplement (1967, p. 208). Writing supplements the ‘natural’ act of speech, masturbation supplements sex. Equally, reading supplements writing. The supplement ambiguously signifies both substitution and growth, or addition, in Derrida’s writing. He writes that the supplement is ‘un surplus, une plénitude enrichissant une autre plénitude, le comble de la présence’; he also writes: ‘mais le supplément supplée. Il ne s’ajoute que pour remplacer’ (p. 208). Ultimately, Preciado’s description of masturbation and reading emphasises the centrality of the prosthesis in pharmacopornography. In Preciado’s writing, this prosthesis is similarly ambiguous: Testogel both functions as a substitute for a lack of testosterone, in which bio masculinity is substituted for techno masculinity, and acts as a prosthesis – extending his pharmacopornographic subjectification into queer futurity. For Derrida, this ‘play’ (in the language of *Pornotopia*) between absence and presence produces a sense of immediacy:

‘L’immédiateté est dérivée’ (p. 226). Equally, *Testo Junkie*’s prosthesis-focus produces urgency and immediacy: the text constructs the *reader-as-prosthesis* – for example, voyeuristically extending, or substituting themselves into, the book’s sex scenes.

The centrality of the prosthesis positions objects of addiction as tangible body-extensions or substitutions, rather than substances of transcendental intoxication. Preciado eschews revelatory descriptions of addiction, writing, in place of a ‘revelation’, of ‘making the real emerge in spotlight clarity’, he feels a ‘tactile perception, occurring in darkness [...] crawling around on a viscous mass. No illumination, but feeling about in the dark. I’m talking about discovering the surface of an interiority with your skin’ (p. 254). For Avital Ronell, addiction is bound up with a Romantic experience of otherness and alterity: Jeffrey Nealon describes her understanding of addiction as an ‘exterior’ or ‘alterior space’ (1998, p. 54). Ronell writes of this ‘exterior’ space: ‘You find yourself incontrovertibly obligated: something occurs prior to owing, and more fundamental still than that of which any trace of empirical guilt can give an account. This relation — to whom? to what?’ (cited in Nealon, p. 54). In Ronell’s conception, addiction allows for the experience of otherness. In comparison with alterity, Preciado writes of addition as an experience of tangible ‘interiority’ (p. 254). In place of intoxicated, transcendental otherness, Preciado writes of crawling around in the dark, feeling his skin rub against something tactile. For Preciado, addiction is prosthetically constructed through the body, thus involves complicity – which Preciado embeds in his text, configuring the reader as an addicted/pornographic pharmacopornographic subject.

### **Addiction and risk**

In Dow Schüll’s *Addiction by Design*, a footnote refers to Henry Lesieur’s 1977 text on addiction, *The Chase*: Lesieur theorised a gendered split between ‘action gambling’ and ‘escape gambling’ (2012, p. 196). According to Lesieur, men were more likely to be ‘action’ gamblers – involved in live games, such as cards and horse races; women were more likely to seek ‘isolation and anonymity’ in machine gambling, in Dow Schüll’s description (p. 196). Lesieur then began to encounter long-haul truck drivers addicted to machine poker and altered his definitions. Later studies proved that women and men were equally likely to participate in, and become addicted to, machine gambling. Erving Goffman, in a study of gambling (specifically, blackjack) in Las Vegas, remarked that it enabled ‘character contests’, an opportunity for self-expression in ‘public settings of risk’ (cited in Dow Schüll,

p. 10). Here, Goffman, despite not gendering his conclusions, describes ‘action gambling’, tied to risk, public display, exposure and masculinity. Similarly, Dostoyevsky describes a roulette win in *The Gambler*: ‘Why, I had got this at the risk of more than my life itself. But I had dared to risk it, and there I was once again, a man among men!’ (ibid, p. 11). Dow Schüll writes that the moment expresses a ‘compelling mix of chance, risk, and status’ (p. 11). Here, she notes the preponderance of risk, but not its perceptible entwinement with masculinity: in Dostoyevsky’s description, risk *produces* masculinity.

In *Testo Junkie*, testosterone embodies risk, which in turn produces masculinity. Preciado frequently frames his addiction to testosterone in terms of risk and exposure: for example, he writes that Testogel is a ‘dangerous game’ – ‘the devil is in my blood’ (p. 421). He also writes on risk specifically: he notes that until the end of the eighteenth century, self-experimentation was common, ‘part of the research protocols’: ‘an ethical precept dictated that the researcher take on the risk of unknown effects on his or her own body before enacting any test on the body of another human’ (p. 350). In fact, according to Katrin Solhdju, only by the end of the eighteenth century had self-experimentation become accepted as a ‘necessary step in pharmaceutical development’ (2007). Londa Schiebinger also writes that it became ‘more systematic and organised’ (2017, p. 80). Allen B. Weisse has charted trends in self-experimentation between 1800 and 1999 which similarly prove that it increased steadily between 1800 and 1899 – from 68 to 126 instances (2012). Between 1900 and 1949, there were 189 cases of self-experimentation, relating to pharmacology, infectious diseases and physiology (ibid).

But Preciado’s description of self-experimentation is composed in order to frame its association with risk. He writes of the ‘risk of unknown effects [...] before enacting any other tests’; he writes elsewhere that ‘knowing yourself by yourself means poisoning yourself by yourself, risking self-mutilation’ (pp. 350; 362). Later, he writes of drag: ‘following the principle of the auto-guinea pig, it is necessary to take the risk of giving corporal and collective practices their chance’ (p. 348). Like Dustan’s barebacking, which he associates with risk, ignoring the possibility of low viral loads, Preciado is desirous of a risky form of addiction: ‘it is [...] only through the strategic re-appropriation of these biotechnological apparatuses that it is possible to invent resistance, to risk revolution’ (p. 344). According to Weisse’s study, women have historically been in a minority among self-experimenters: only 13 were recorded in his dataset (2012). Thus, Preciado aligns his addictive project with a masculine tradition of risk. As Stack writes of *Testo Junkie*: a ‘somasochistic play with threat and danger runs throughout the text’ (2016, p. 19).

Risk is specifically connected to masculine bodies: Nassim N. Taleb and Constantine Sandis have written about the economic necessity of ‘skin in the game’ and sharing risk (2013). The expression ‘skin in the game’ contemporaneously refers to taking financial risks, and supposedly derives from *The Merchant of Venice* – in which Shylock demands a pound of Antonio’s flesh as collateral for a loan of three thousand ducats. Taleb and Sandis conclude that ‘skin in the game heuristics follow directly from the principle of antifragility’ (2013, p. 10). ‘Antifragility’ is Taleb’s conception of ‘positive sensitivity’ to stress, in which a material not only robustly responds to stress, but adapts (p. 10). Ultimately, ‘skin in the game’ implies agency: the agent chooses to place his skin in the game and assumes any risk involved. Taleb associates this agency with men: he writes elsewhere of ‘the courage to stand up when half-men are afraid for their reputation’ and ‘weak men act to satisfy their needs, stronger men their duties’ (2010). Taleb presents *men* as riskers-of-bodies. In comparison, ‘skin game’ refers to sex work, and ‘skin flicks’, pornographic films. Culturally, self-experimentation is associated with masculinity; women are subject to the ‘game’, rather than granted agency and assuming skin-risk. Described in an earlier chapter, in Preciado’s writing, body-risk-taking is associated with masculinity; women are responsible for ‘skin care’: ‘they take care of the skin of the world’ (p. 325).

For example, in comparison with the thrilling risk of addiction, Preciado depicts contraception as ‘slot play’, in Dow Schüll’s writing: ‘mindless, sheer-chance-type-gambling’, for ‘women [and] adolescents’ (2012, p. 11). Mapping his theory onto ‘action’ and ‘escape’ gambling, testosterone prompts an ‘explosion of the desire to fuck’, the ability to ‘smash the window with [my] fist’ and ‘fuck [my] neighbor’ (p. 95). His addiction is galvanizing and exciting. By contrast, contraception, and by extension, a woman’s body, is represented through panopticon imagery. In Preciado’s conception, women are defined through escape gambling, perpetually attempting to escape from their own self-regulating body-prisons, while men are fucking, smashing and bravely risking their lives. Preciado exalts Freud (albeit humorously) who notably categorized orgasms into mature and immature – mature involving vaginal penetration, and immature referring to clitoral orgasms, and masturbation (1922): ‘not hesitating to transform his own body into a field of surgical experimentation, Freud brought his own testicles into play’ (p. 357). The risk inherent in his perceived addiction to testosterone, which he conceives of in the tradition of Freud taking cocaine and injecting his testicles, is never directly compared with the risks associated with taking hormonal contraception. Women *suffer* the risks associated with potential breast cancer, in Preciado’s conception, rather than nobly inhabiting them, or

taking them. Agency is mostly restricted to ‘somatic fictions’ of masculinity (p. 153). In 1999 there were 82 cases of medical self-experimentation; currently, globally, 320 million women take hormonal contraception, practising body modification daily, habitually – and absorbing its associated risks (2017).

But perhaps Preciado’s risk and addiction discourse can be complicated through a discussion of infiltration: the risk *to* masculinity of women and non-binary people taking testosterone, rather than simply its inherent risk to his own body. Preciado writes of the necessity of the trans-feminist movement network: ‘it [...] infiltrates the very circuits of global capitalism’ (p. 342). Elsewhere he writes that technologies of the body ‘infiltrate and penetrate daily life’, and that Agnes, in the first case of hermaphroditism, was unaware that she ‘will infiltrate the pharmacopornographic order’ (pp. 77; 382). Thus, Preciado’s testosterone addiction can be framed in terms of infiltration: his body poses a risk to the pharmacopornographic order because it infiltrates the ‘daily life’ of masculinity (p. 77).

His body technology maps onto the circuits of global capitalism: perhaps his testohighs rehearse masculinity, but they are surreptitious, illicit and performative – drag, rather than embodiment. Risk also relates to Preciado’s embodiment of the biodrag king, and his embrace of the virus: the risk of addiction is proliferation and the loss of control, which is desirable in the virus model. He writes: ‘once the drag king virus has been triggered in each participant, the hermeneutics of gender suspicion extend beyond the workshop and spread to the rest of daily life, causing modifications within social interactions’ (p. 374). He adds that drag king work ‘isn’t the awareness of being an imitator of masculinity’, rather it involves the realization, or perception, that we are all ‘more or less realistic biofictions of performative gender and sexual norms’ (p. 373). Thus, the ‘risk’ of testosterone addiction is the ‘risk of revolution’ Preciado described (p. 344). The risk is collective as well as personal, composed of the crumbling of masculinity as truth, or strength, and its exposure as biofiction. ‘Junkie’ originates from the 1920s: addicts would sell junk metal to buy heroin. In Preciado’s aptly named *Testo Junkie*, the author sells masculinity up the river as biofiction, and junk, while imbibing its synthetic, drag relation.

### **Architecture of addiction**

Preciado often frames the body in relation to architecture: ‘body consumption and architecture’, ‘intimate architectural forms’; the pill is ‘disciplinary architecture’ (pp. 32; 76). But he also describes addiction in terms of architecture: ‘two days of fucking without a

break. Testogel and lubricant turning into architecture: a brilliant, viscous edifice, lavished on us. This is the mind in its moist, adhesive state [...] her body is a posh club. It's called the Hard-Play Space. I've never tried anything better' (p. 402). Preciado writes that testosterone and lubricant 'impregnate the air, enriching it'; he breathes its 'aqueous consistency without difficulty', his lungs have 'recovered their amphibian ability' (p. 402). The lubricant 'thins the walls' of Preciado's Testogel edifice, and 'restricts individuality to its thinnest state' (p. 402). Here, Preciado describes perceived addictive repetition-compulsion as more than the readily theorized addictive lack: addiction 'enriches' his environment, producing a viscous substance, which becomes an edifice (p. 402). Body architecture is wet, sticky and malleable, a space susceptible to wish fulfillment: the architecture of addiction is used to express both adaptation and somatic plasticity.

Firstly, Preciado writes that inside the 'viscous edifice', he can breathe normally, in the 'enriched' air, and notes that his lungs have 'recovered' previous 'amphibian' abilities relating to the womb (p. 402). Here, the architecture of addiction appears to be capable of activating processes of both adaptation and regression – Preciado becomes a gilled newt-human composite, perfectly adapted to his environment, but he also regresses to the viscous habitat of the womb. Stiegler writes that humans are always tempted to regress to animality, but adds that the primary difference between animals and humans is the distinction between the technical and biological (2010, p. 58). Humans are defined by our capacity for technical evolution or *epiphylogenesis*, in Stiegler's writing, which posits that we evolve through adoption (of tools) rather than adaptation. Preciado's gilled animal-human hybrid composed of Testogel and lubricant is animalistic, but human in its architectural relation to addiction. Thus, perhaps Preciado's imagery implicates the role of addiction in epiphylogenesis – he chooses Testogel, adopts it as a tool, and, accordingly, evolves. The 'capacity for self-invention', as Christina Howells summarizes epiphylogenesis, applies to Preciado's addiction to both Despentex and testosterone: he produces bodily and extra-bodily edifices and imagines his body into various new configurations – with gills, with a penis (2013, p. 28).

This evolution-through-technics can be described through Stiegler's conception of artificial selection. Moore describes natural selection through the image of a foot mutating into a hand, the hand is 'retroactively interpreted as a proto-organ for grasping that adapted its bearer for survival' (2017, p. 192). Equally, in Stiegler's writing, when a hand grasps a tool, the hand is transformed, 'subjectivity is also reinvented': the tool and the subject 'continually retrace one another', and the tool produces the new hand (Moore 2017, p. 192).

Preciado's use of Testogel also represents artificial selection and evolution, or mutation: his body mutates through his adoption of Testogel, and the relationship between Testogel and his body produces a new subjectivity.

Stiegler advances adoption in contrast to adaptation, criticizing performance-based adaptationist ideologies (2010, p. 31). Malabou's distinction between flexible and plastic maps onto Stiegler's adoption/adaptation model: she similarly argues that 'flexible' workers and brains are desirable in a capitalist context – because they are adaptive, and performance-focused. Preciado's descriptions of the viscous architecture of addiction appear to exist somewhere between plasticity and flexibility, or adoption and adaptation: 'two days of fucking without a break' epitomizes capitalist performance – the injunction to perform combined with the injunction to enjoy. Preciado's 'two days of fucking without a break' (p. 403) is parodic Stakhanovite labour: in 1935, Soviet propaganda dictates that Alexsei Stakhanov mined 102 tons of coal in 5 hours (1997, p. 199). The Stakhanovite movement was born: workers inspired by Stakhanov competed with each other, in terms of endurance, speed, efficiency and productivity. In Preciado's writing, their sex-marathon also represents (seemingly) self-imposed, increased productivity, but contemporary capitalist labour is also clearly distinguished from its Stakhanovite structure: 'fucking' rather than coal mining, emphasizing the centrality of the production of pleasure in pharmacopornographic economies.

The (body) edifice that Preciado constructs through 'two days of fucking', or that emerges from his addiction, is moist and adhesive – also appearing 'flexible'; and his body produces gills to adapt to its viscous surroundings (p. 403). But Preciado's descriptions could also be described as adaptation grounded in adoption: Testogel and lubricant are his building materials – his body only evolves in relation to specific body tools, or technologies. His description of adaptation could also be represented through performance: Preciado performs adaptation-addiction drag. Stiegler writes that adoption is strictly separate from adaptation. For Stiegler, adaptation is the province of animals and animalized humans (2010, p. 31). Noted above, Stiegler has also written of a human temptation to regress to animality (p. 31). But Preciado's elision of animality, adoption and adaptation proves that, for him, animality, or the regression to the womb, is structurally embedded in technical evolution and addiction. If adaptation is narratively enshrined in capitalism, Preciado immerses himself in both in order to disrupt and understand them. His 'architecture' is malleable, or 'flexible', but, crucially, he designates its shape. Preciado writes that architectural addiction 'restricts individuality to its thinnest state' (p. 402). Here, his architecture is capable of

subsuming singularities, aligning with ‘flexibility’ and ‘adaptation’, but also ensuring permeability. His body-architecture is permeable to chemical evolution, as well as vulnerable to co-option.

Preciado’s alignment of evolution with addiction also implies a connection between addiction and neuroplasticity, or somatic plasticity. For Preciado, addiction appears to be a manifestation of neuroplasticity, rather than representative of a ‘lack’. Moore writes that addiction can be understood as a ‘basic structural possibility of the neuroplasticity that allows us to shape and be shaped by our surroundings. Addiction [...] becomes a side-effect of the ability of the brain to adapt’ (2017, p. 69). Preciado’s interpretation of addiction as architecture accords with Moore’s understanding of addiction as structural; but Moore writes that addiction represents possibility, whereas for Preciado, addiction is a precondition for shaping. In *Testo Junkie*, his addictions to love and Testogel are productive rather than a ‘side-effect’ – they produce ‘brilliant’ edifices, gilled bodies and prosthetic penises (2017).

## **Viscosity**

Elizabeth Grosz writes that, for Sartre, ‘the viscous, the fluid, the flows which infiltrate and seep, are horrifying in themselves’ (1994, p. 194). In *L’Être et le Néant*, Sartre certainly interprets viscosity as horrifying, but partly because it differs from ‘fluid’ and ‘flows’: he writes of the ‘caractère louche de substance entre deux états’ (1965, p. 652). Viscosity represents remodelling: ‘un ravatement’, but also flattening: ‘un dégonflage [...] et comme l’étalement, le raplatissement des seins un peu mûrs d’une femme qui s’étend sur le dos’ (p. 652). For Sartre, women’s bodies and viscosity are equally suspicious and disappointing – see his writing on women-as-holes, discussed in an earlier chapter. Ultimately, in Sartre’s writing, viscosity is troublingly, horrifyingly agential: ‘il s’accroche comme une sangue’; viscosity is capable of coming alive, and turning against you: viscosity ‘apparaît comme un liquide vu dans un cauchemar et dont toutes les propriétés s’animent d’une sorte de vie et se retourneraient contre moi’ (p. 652).

In comparison, in *Testo Junkie*, viscosity signifies addiction and possibility. Addiction is represented through ‘crawling on a viscous mass’, and it produces ‘viscous’ edifices (p. 254). Addiction might not provoke revelations, Preciado notes, but it does produce the feeling of ‘tasting the electrically viscous truth of being’ (which sounds suspiciously like a revelation) (p. 254). Preciado writes that the pharmacopornographic industry is ‘white and viscous gold: the crystalline powder of biopolitical capitalism’ (p. 40).

Orgasmic force is similarly ‘carnal’ and ‘viscous’; he further notes that this is the age of ‘featherweight, viscous, gelatinous’ body technologies that can be ‘injected, inhaled – “incorporated”’ (pp. 43; 77). Preciado writes that beavers, who swim ‘nimble’ through the river become ‘clumsy’ when crossing land to water, like Baudelaire’s maladapted albatross: ‘their tails too heavy; still covered by a liquid film, can barely distinguish the other shore’ (p. 261). Cars ‘zigzag to try to trap these viscous volumes under their tires’ (p. 262). Finally, towards the end of the text, Preciado writes that the distinctive feature of sex is ‘gel’: ‘being isn’t matter, but gel (p. 413). “Foam” – and not planetary mega-ejaculation issuing from a heroic biocock, as Sloterdijk implies – but rather a sticky compound desiring consciousness, a sticky molecular network trying to force its way into life’ (p. 413). This ‘fermentation of subjectivity’, in Sloterdijk’s description, is ‘viscous’, for Preciado (p. 412). But this fermenting subjectivity only ‘discovers itself’ ‘at the price of its own monstrous transformation’ (p. 412).

Thus, the pornographic and additive rhythms described in *Testo Junkie* produce a viscous gel, representative of mutating subjectivity. ‘Viscous’ is used as a synonym for mutating, transforming, or attempted adaptation/adoption: Preciado’s beavers are ‘becoming’, represented by their viscosity, but are trapped and killed in the process of transformation (p. 262). If body technologies are viscous and easily incorporable, they can be weaponized. Here, Preciado’s viscosity metaphor incorporates my earlier discussion of risk: danger is inherent in mutation, transformation and the production of incorporable technologies. As Sartre writes ‘Toucher du visqueux, c’est risquer de se diluer en viscosité’ (p. 652). Viscosity represents risk, as well mutation and possibility.

In order to determine a relationship between viscosity and addiction beyond signifier/signified, we must examine the composition of Preciado’s ubiquitous viscous mass: firstly, its stickiness, secondly, its status between liquid and solid, and finally, its juxtaposition with sperm. Its stickiness is immediately apparent: Preciado refers to the ‘adhesive edifice’ produced by his addiction, ‘sticky’ molecular networks, and the ‘sticky problem’ of ‘pharmacopornographic production’ (p. 402). The ‘adhesive’ nature of the edifice he builds is emblematic of the repetition compulsion ingrained in addiction, Moore writes that as our neuroplastic brains adjust to addictive circumstances, ‘circuits not linked to the dopamine craving fall into disuse and are ‘pruned’ away, narrowing attention more tightly around repetition-compulsion’ (2017). We become ‘locked into restrictive patterns of repetitive behavior. Unable to forge new neuronal connections, a vicious circle of dopamine-release kicks in, whereby we only respond to the environmental cues that trigger

its secretion' (2017). We might interpret Preciado's 'two days of fucking without a break', producing architectural, viscous secretions, as the 'pruning' away of disused connections, the tightening around repetitive behaviour characteristic of 'sticky' addiction (2017). Preciado writes of the mind's 'moist, adhesive' state in addition, referring to both its plasticity and its inability to peel itself away from behaviour that releases dopamine (p. 402).

Secondly, 'solid' and 'liquid' are discrete, non-continuous states, in comparison with viscosity, which is on a continuum – materials can be more or less viscous. Viscosity is also defined by resistance to flow: molecules in viscous materials are either sticky, and attracted to each other, or get tangled around each other, inhibiting flow. Preciado elides addiction with viscosity, accordingly, depicting addiction in opposition to flow. Interpreting 'flow' as, broadly, 'adaptation' or 'flexibility', viscosity, thus addiction, rejects both in favour of a sticky continuum, perhaps analogous to the continuum of subjectivities and genders in *Testo Junkie*. Thus, here, addiction is not represented as a pure 'state', rather it is Moore's 'basic structural possibility' on the continuum of all 'experiential learning' (2017). Preciado and Despentès are metaphorical viscous molecules, sticking to each other, and tangled around each other after 'two days of fucking without a break' – implying that viscosity increases with addiction (p. 403). The stickier we are, the more resistant we are to external 'flow' or the demands of 'flexibility' and 'adaptation' embedded in pharmacopornographic capitalism.

Finally: the viscous material Preciado and Despentès produce resembles sperm, but not, as Preciado notes later, Sloterdijk's 'mega-ejaculation issuing from a heroic biocock' (p. 412). Rather, the compound of Testogel and lubricant, or the 'distinctive feature of sex', is a 'sticky compound desiring consciousness, a sticky molecular network trying to force its way into life' (p. 412). Thus, it materially resembles sperm, but unlike sperm, is composed of materials unlikely to successfully 'force its way into life'. Preciado's sperm, returning to Edelman, represents the reproduction of queerness, another performative intervention into the 'politics of reproductive futurism': this viscous material is drag sperm (p. 412). Noted in 'The Drag King', Preciado writes that we are 'technobiopolitically' designed to 'screw', 'reproduce' and 'consume': pharmacopornography's objective is the 'reproduction of the species' (p. 51).

In Preciado's writing, addiction produces a parodic material: drag sperm, which is both a negation of reproduction and enables the reproduction of queerness, in contrast to the replication of the 'National Body' (p. 118). Here, addiction is a mechanism for this process of queer reproduction. 'Drag sperm' could also be described through pastiche – empty

parody, and empty of its reproductive power. Furthermore, what Ingeborg Hoesterey describes as the ‘semiotic promiscuity of [...] pastiche’ aligns with Preciado’s stylistic ‘promiscuity’ (2001, p. 103). Ultimately, if this is the ‘age’ of viscous, inhalable and incorporable technology, according to Preciado, our resistant technologies must map onto their contours (p. 191). ‘Drag sperm’ is produced by, but also affixes itself to, bodies in Preciado’s conception, becoming the architecture of new subjectivities. Thus, addiction produces the materiality of subjectivities, and places them on a viscous continuum. In order to intervene in processes of pharmacopornographic subjectification, as Crowley writes in an article on Bataille and sticky subjectivities: ‘we have to embrace the tackiness’ (2004, p. 768).

### **Hairy Arm Addiction**

*Testo Junkie* also depicts Preciado’s addiction to the ‘Hairy Arm’ (p. 292). Preciado watches the filming of a pornographic scene, in which a disembodied hairy arm occasionally intrudes to fondle the woman participating. In a comically horrifying scene: ‘a short, fat, hairy arm enters the frame, tugs at the neckline of the little top, touches first one breast, then the other. No one speaks’ (p. 407). Later the ‘hairy arm reappears in the frame, pushes back the hair to reveal the girl’s breasts’; the hairy arm grabs the woman’s neck while ‘a short thick cock moves across the frame for a brief moment, immediately disappearing under the girl’s body. She is sitting on a body that seems to be the anatomical continuation of the hairy arm’ (p. 407). The protagonists of the film are ‘a white hairy arm and a mini-cock without a body [...] in this case, the girl is a simple masturbatory bio-device’ (p. 408). Preciado wonders, ‘will I become a Hairy Arm if I keep on taking testosterone’ (p. 408). Although, for Preciado, testosterone ‘isn’t masculinity’, it is a ‘by-product’ that has been the ‘exclusive property of cis-males’, ‘until now’ (p. 141). Preciado separates testosterone and masculinity and defines masculinity through prostheses – implying its adoptive and appropriative potential. Masculinity is a fiction, which can be hacked or reconstructed, thus his addiction is similarly fictitious and prosthetic. Described in ‘The Biodrag King’, the Hairy Arm embodies the significance of prostheses in *Testo Junkie*: the Hairy Arm is ‘short’ and ‘fat’, like a ‘short thick cock’ (p. 407). Both are disembodied pornographic prostheses, and subject to the pornographic, addictive rhythm of ‘excitation-frustration-excitation’ (p. 40).

*Testo Junkie* describes Preciado’s progressive identification with, or addiction to, the Hairy Arm: representative of traditional, hetero-macho masculinity. When Despentis is

‘playing’ with Preciado’s feelings, he writes, ‘to avoid sinking into an ordinary episode of female masochism, amplified by a rise in estrogen, I force myself into the strict discipline of a program of virile coaching [...] I practise several exercises for becoming an elite macho and enduring her absences’ (p. 322). Preciado dreams of smashing windows and fucking his neighbours; he writes that, collectively, women both ‘desire’, ‘with repulsion’ to ‘do it with Hairy Arm’, and at the same time to ‘transform’ into the Hairy Arm (p. 408). Notably, Preciado’s embrace of testosterone and prosthetic masculinity is devoid of repulsion.

Noys criticises Preciado’s (over) identification with capitalism and masculinity, his accelerationist ‘immersion’ within the ‘materialities of the present’, specifically referring to his ‘feeling of being in perfect harmony with the rhythm of the city’ – which the following chapter will explore (2013). Hester argues that Preciado is exploring the ‘possibilities of gendered embodiment which co-option of masculine privilege can provide’ (2015). As Preciado writes: ‘A new cartography of the city takes shape; for the first time you can enjoy the pleasure of the public space of the male flaneur, non-existent for a body culturally encoded as female’ (p. 32). But Hester does acknowledge that Preciado’s appropriative political techniques involve strategies of immersion and compliance that result in ‘opposition becoming all but indistinguishable from capitulation’ (2015). Hester adds: ‘This is ‘resistance through compliance’ – except the resistance within this compliance is arguably somewhat difficult to locate’ (2015). Here, perhaps, Preciado’s burgeoning addiction to the Hairy Arm is capable of obscuring resistance and opposition.

Ultimately, Preciado’s Testogel addiction allows him to identify with ‘somatic fictions’ of masculinity and femininity (p. 153). Pedro Pereira writes: ‘Gender is similar to the dildo, because its carnal plasticity destabilizes the distinction between the imitator and what it imitates [...] between nature and artifice’ (2008, p. 3) Preciado’s identification with the Hairy Arm also enables him to access gender’s ‘carnal plasticity’ (p. 3). Dow Schüll writes that social theorists have focused on the role of technology in the ‘production of broad-scale insecurities’, from environmental disasters to global financial crises and fluctuating job markets (p. 13). She adds that ‘subjective insecurities’ ‘percolate through so-called risk society as a result of these “manufactured uncertainties” (Ulrich Beck)’ but notes that fewer theorists have examined how individuals use technology to ‘manufacture “certainties” – for, example the feeling of certainty experienced by machine gamblers (p. 13). Preciado’s identification with testosterone and prosthetic masculinity can be understood as form of manufactured certainty, with an emphasis on its manufacture. But in Preciado’s writing, ‘manufactured certainty’ is also an oxymoron: the manufactured composition of

somatic fictions destabilises their perceived ‘certainty’, and activates the ‘play’ between ‘imitator and what it imitates’ (p. 3). These fictions, as Preciado describes them, do not ‘lack material reality’ but their continued existence depends on Butler’s performative, repetitive processes of ‘political construction’ (p. 69). Thus, Preciado’s addictions to testosterone and masculinity are constructed fictions, composed of habits and synthetic hormones.

But Preciado also affirms that masculinity is the ‘only somatic fiction with political power’, and adopts it determinedly (p. 109). Preciado justifies his immersion within the capitalist/ masculinist economy on the basis that his adoption of masculinity involves severing it from medical and social authority. But his habits, and description of testo-highs reinforce its cultural authority. For Preciado masculinity’s power is seductive and inescapable, and the possibilities of an infiltrated masculinity are limitless. However, crucially, in *Testo Junkie*, masculinity is prosthetic and a body-fiction, or ‘somatic fiction’ (p. 153). Preciado writes that when we acknowledge the ‘technical construction’ of gender and sexuality, ‘nature and identity are brought to the level of a somatic parody’ (p. 105). *Testo Junkie* makes clear the parodic nature of masculinity through the ‘Hairy Arm’: a humorous image, introduced as a ‘mini-cock without a body’, a strange floating symbol of the presence/absence play of masculinity – described in relation to Lacan and Grosz in my earlier chapter on sex work (p. 407).

One of the most vitriolic criticisms of transgenderism, *The Transsexual Empire* (1979), contradictorily condemned trans people for being both too much like men and too much like women: trans women, for example, were both invading cis-women’s spaces and raping them, and, simultaneously, strengthening traditional conceptions of femininity. The Hairy Arm satirically addresses these enduring transphobic perceptions of being transgender. The Hairy Arm is disembodied and intrusive: Preciado watches it intrude to fondle the woman in a pornographic film. Preciado also writes of trans masculinity, trans feminist movements and ‘queer critique’ ‘spreading through fragile but extensive networks’ (p. 343). This movement ‘circulates like a political antidote that infiltrates the very circuits of global capitalism’ (p. 343). Thus, the adopted Hairy Arm, or the trans Hairy Arm represents surreptitious infiltration. The macho-capitalised Hairy Arm is also hairy, associated with porn and parodies traditional masculinity: ‘your basic Hairy Arm heterosexual masturbator’ (p. 407).

Ultimately, Preciado’s Hairy Arm addiction represents addiction-as-material: prosthetic and viscous, in order to represent the materiality of being transgender. Contemporary trans theorists often reject the conception of gender-as-social-construct, or

entirely performative: for example, Julie Serano writes ‘if one more person tells me that ‘all gender is performance’, I think I am going to strangle them’ (2013). Although bodies and genders are constructed and performative, Halberstam writes that Serano and other theorists ‘worry that adopting a theory of performativity implies that trans\* is not real, material, authentic’ (2018). Crucially, trans bodies are material, as well as performative – hence Preciado’s intensification of performativity into biodrag – his interpretation of performativity-made-material. Equally, Preciado frames taking Testogel as an addiction to, and transformation into, the Hairy Arm, which makes material an experience perceived to be abstractly performative. Gender is literally rather than figuratively plastic: addiction frames transgenderism through an adoptive relationship which emphasises equal, continuous materiality between Testogel, his new body and his new subjectivity.

### **Feminist Objectivity**

In *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, Haraway writes of the ‘persistence of vision’: ‘I would like to insist on the embodied nature of all vision [...] I would like a doctrine of embodied objectivity that accommodates paradoxical and critical feminist science projects’ (1988, p. 581). For Haraway, ‘Feminist Objectivity means quite simply situated knowledges’ (p. 581). For Preciado, addiction, or intoxication, is an expression of situated knowledge and ‘feminist objectivity’. His introduction to *Testo Junkie* opens with: ‘This book is not a memoir. This book is a testosterone-based, voluntary intoxication protocol, which concerns the body and affects of BP’ (p. 12). His opening parodies dry, technical writing, but his first sentence is followed by: ‘A body-essay. Fiction, actually’, and his writing begins to loosen and unravel (p. 12). If his opening sentence expresses, or parodies, the need for scientific validation, his second sentence dismisses professions of objectivity and admits the ‘fictitious’ nature of his own work. Preciado continues: ‘If things must be pushed to the extreme, this is a somatopolitical fiction, a theory of the self, or self’ (p. 12). Firstly, the body enters Preciado’s ‘protocol’, followed by subjectivity. *Testo Junkie* establishes itself in opposition to Haraway’s ‘god trick’: ‘seeing everything from nowhere’, and structures its situated-ness: the text is situated in Preciado’s body, and he acknowledges its subjectivity: the text is a theory of ‘self’ (p. 581).

But Preciado writes that the book ‘concerns’ ‘BP’, and writes of ‘a body-essay’, and ‘the self’ (p. 12). Despite his acknowledgement of the body’s centrality to his

‘intoxication protocol’, and text’s status as a ‘self’ theory, personal and possessive pronouns are notably absent (p. 12). In contrast, the final chapter of *Testo Junkie* begins with an acknowledgement of his addictive, intoxicating relationships: ‘I think of *my* love for VD. Of *my* relationship with testosterone’ (my italics) (p. 400). The book concludes with a promise shared with Despentés, directed at Dustan: ‘we will come to rub our bodies against your grave, that we will come to leave the traces of our bodily fluids on the slab [...] we will sleep on your earth, warm your bones; and like vampires, we will come to quench your thirst for sex, blood, and testosterone’ (p. 428). A textual movement is discernible: from attempted objectivity, a distant ‘BP’, to ‘my love’, ‘my relationship’, and the rhythmic, cumulative repetition of ‘we will’. ‘This book is a testosterone-based, voluntary intoxication protocol, which concerns the body and affects of BP’ is an embodied promise to the reader, but ‘we will come to quench your thirst for sex, blood and testosterone’ is a situated, embodied promise (pp. 12; 428). For Haraway, ‘embodied’ and ‘situated’ are synonymous, but *Testo Junkie* perhaps enables us to visualise a distinction: Preciado’s opening is indisputably ‘embodied’ (of *a* body), but his conclusion situates his perspective (*his* body). His opening locates the body as the matrix of power and subjectivity, but as an author, his perspective is absent. Haraway writes of ‘false vision’ which promises ‘transcendence of all limits and responsibility’: Preciado’s ‘voluntary intoxication protocol’, is ‘false’ in its lack of ‘situated’ perspective: ‘protocol’ expresses an affinity with scientific etiquette, which attempts to avoid personal perspective (p. 590).

Thus, perhaps Preciado’s introduction to *Testo Junkie* inculcates necessary suspicion in his reader: of denied complicity and ‘false vision’ (p. 590). The relationship between Haraway’s ‘feminist objectivity’ and Preciado’s addiction to testosterone illuminates three crucial themes: an acknowledgement of the role of prostheses in vision and perspective, an admission of the reader’s possible attachment to ‘false vision’ and claims of objectivity, and an assertion of the role of addiction, or intoxication in the movement from ‘false vision’ to ‘feminist objectivity’ or ‘situated’ knowledge and politics.

Haraway notes that embodied or situated knowledge involves interrogating the ‘various apparatuses of visual production’: she also writes that ‘vision requires instruments of vision’ (p. 589). Firstly, Preciado’s texts involve ‘interrogating’ ‘visual production: *Pornotopia* analyses visual production through pornography and architecture and, I concluded earlier, produced the character of the awkward voyeur, defined by awkward visual production. The awkward voyeur is required to perform and observe frantically and simultaneously. *Testo Junkie* also analyses visual production, through Preciado’s ‘sex

worker’, characterised by awkward vision – she is both prison-guard and prisoner. Secondly, Haraway writes that situated knowledge requires ‘instruments of vision’: situated knowledge is prosthetically constructed (p. 586). In *Pornotopia*, pornography is an ‘instrument of vision’, and in *Testo Junkie*, pharmacological products, such as hormonal contraceptives and testosterone gel, are described as ‘apparatuses’ capable of allowing Preciado to imagine himself in different bodies. Preciado also writes that ‘visual frameworks produce different somato-political living fictions’ (p. 115). If we establish different visual frameworks, through the ‘reappropriation’ of ‘biotechnological apparatuses’, we can ‘invent resistance’ (p. 345). Here, Preciado makes clear that somatic fictions are visually produced – and that these visual frameworks are produced through body-technologies.

Thus, for Preciado, Testogel is a ‘tool’ and a ‘body-technology’, and addictive relationships with these technologies are capable of producing situated knowledge. Preciado writes that body-technologies delimit the ‘scope of our somatic potentialities and function like prostheses of subjectification’ (p. 117). Scope implies visibility, and emphasises the connection between vision and somatic fictions. Preciado galvanises the reader to use Haraway’s ‘instruments of vision’ in order to imagine a different body, or a different subjectivity. Preciado writes: ‘your memory, your desire, your sensibility, your cock, your dildo, your blood, your sperm, your vulva, your ova... are the tools of a potential gendercopyleft revolution’ (p. 395). Your body parts can be instrumentalised in order to visualise alternate body configurations. His addiction to Testogel represents the instrumentalisation of his body: addiction represents the relationship of his body, a bio-apparatus, with Testogel, a techno-apparatus, in order to visualise himself into a new body and subjectivity. Here, trans-masculinity is visually produced through Haraway’s ‘instruments of vision’ – Testogel, and his body.

For example: in a previous chapter, I described how Preciado imagined himself both ‘with and without a cock’; he ‘takes turns’ at imagining both bodies and worries about Despentés’ fixed vision: ‘the moment I get undressed, she’ll only see one of these bodies. Being reduced to one fixed image frightens me’ (p. 89). Preciado’s addiction to Testogel represents ‘potential transformation’: this transformation involves activating body technologies in a visual framework in order to produce new body fictions (p. 42). In *Testo Junkie*, Testogel is a tool of visual multiplicity and visual potentiality, which effects the transformation of bodies.

Through Preciado’s addiction to Testogel, he also disrupts the reader’s perception of his testosterone ‘protocol’ (p. 12). Preciado’s reference to a ‘protocol’ in his introduction

emphasises our collective trust in scientific phrasing and narratives (p. 12). Readers of *Testo Junkie* establish presumptions established through his description of ‘protocol’, which are disrupted through the course of the text – which reveals the vulnerability and permeability of Preciado’s body to Testogel. ‘Protocol’ anticipates an analysis of the affects and effects of testosterone without the messy complication of subjectivity, or situated vision. Ultimately, ‘protocol’ deliberately inadequately describes Preciado’s ‘skin in the game’: for Preciado, Testogel is exciting, stimulating and makes him feel comfortable in his body. Preciado’s satirical use of protocol acts to demonstrate the lack of strict protocol in his experiment: Preciado immerses himself subjectively in Testogel, rather than objectively analysing the effects of testosterone on ‘BP’ (p. 12). His addiction, which is immersive and subjective, is opposed to rigorous protocol. ‘Protocol’ also establishes a connection between testosterone and positions of privileged vision. Preciado’s emphasis on narrative and subjectivity while using Testogel collapses the necessity of associating masculine privileges with cis men: Preciado writes that the effects of testosterone have been, for far too long, the ‘exclusive property of cis males’ – including privileged vision, symbolised through ‘protocol’ (p. 141). Preciado’s addicted, situated ‘feminist objectivity’ allows him to experience spaces and vision in different ways.

Haraway writes that the ‘only position’ from which objectivity ‘could not possibly be practised’ is ‘the Man’, the ‘Master’, whose ‘Eye produces, appropriates and orders all difference’ (p. 587). Crucially, as a trans-man, Preciado is never ‘the Man’, or the ‘Master’, his appropriation of privileged vision is always an act of theft or infiltration. As he writes in *Libération* recently: ‘Comme homme-trans, je me désidentifie de la masculinité dominante et de sa définition nécropolitique [...] je suis aussi loin de votre esthétique [...] qu’un moine bouddhiste lévitant à Lhassa l’est du supermarché Carrefour’ (2018). Thus, Preciado’s addiction to testosterone can be framed as ‘drag objectivity’: ‘subject fiction in a flash’ – most crucially, ‘fiction’. ‘Fiction’ appears 54 times in the text – predominantly in the form of ‘somatic fiction’, but Preciado also refers to biopolitical fictions, political fictions, the fictions of ‘biofemininity’, femininity and masculinity, cultural fictions, sex fictions and ‘biotechnological’ fictions. Preciado’s project is intertwined with his understanding of ‘fiction’ as constructed, situated ‘truth’, vulnerable to deconstruction, interpretation and revision, but ‘responsible’ – here meaning aware of authorship and self-positioning. Haraway notes that feminist, embodied objectivity requires ‘responsibility’ for ‘truth claims’, which Preciado’s repetition of ‘fiction’ implies (p. 587). He repeatedly emphasises the fictitious nature of the text, thereby situating himself and emphasising his authorship.

Preciado notes that he echoes Haraway when he writes of a ‘positioned, responsible corporal political practice’ which involves ‘being the lab rat in his or her own laboratory’ (p. 110). Here, Preciado elides his self-experimentation and addiction with the act of responsible, situated feminist objectivity.

Ultimately, for Preciado, addiction appears to galvanise the movement from ‘false vision’ to situated knowledge and politics, from ‘BP’ to ‘my relationship’ with testosterone and ‘my’ love. Haraway writes that ‘we need to learn in our bodies’ in order to ‘name where we are and are not’: ‘particular and specific embodiment’ enables feminist objectivity, in contrast to ‘false vision promising transcendence of all limits and responsibility’ (p. 582). Preciado writes that taking drugs is the ‘experimental ground on which we learn to live in a somatic [...] environment’ (p. 362). Equally, he writes of the ‘breakdown of learned body gestures’ in drag king workshops, and of ‘learning to breathe like mutant beasts’ in viscous environments of addiction and toxicity (p. 371). Thus, *Testo Junkie* explores the process of body-learning: from gestures and cultural performativity, to the reconfiguration of his body when he takes testosterone – the change in his sweat, the feel of his body. He writes: ‘How can I explain what is happening to me? [...] what kind of feminist am I today: a feminist hooked on testosterone, or a transgender body hooked on feminism’ (p. 22). He notes that he must ‘revise’ his ‘classics’: ‘to subject those theories to the shock that was provoked in me by the practice of taking testosterone’ (p. 22) Here, Preciado describes the interplay of theories and bodies, and enacts Haraway’s incitement to ‘learn in our bodies’ (p. 582). For Preciado, addiction represents the interplay of learning and un-learning body and gender fictions, embodying them, and exposing them. Despite its sticky materiality, addiction enables the progression of feminist objectivity in *Testo Junkie*: Preciado’s body and perspective become increasingly present in the text, and the text becomes correspondingly ‘situated’.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the ‘junkie’ of *Testo Junkie* is defined through materiality, production (of bodies and subjectivities), prosthetics, adoption, the pornographic rhythm of excitation-frustration-excitation, ‘play’, complicity and stickiness, or viscosity. Addiction signifies the materiality of trans bodies and fictions. Preciado writes that fictions ‘do not lack material reality’, thus, in *Testo Junkie*, addiction emphasises our adoptive relationships with biotechnological prostheses. Addiction is characterised as dependence on prostheses like

Testogel, in order to effect bodily transformation. Crucially, addiction is prosthetically constructed. Addiction also represents our dependence on rhythms and narratives. For example, addiction functions through the dependent pornographic cycle of excitation-frustration-excitation requires bodies to galvanise; bodies rely on the cyclical production of pleasure. This gluttonous rhythm precludes satisfaction, in order to produce more pleasure.

In *Testo Junkie*, addictive dependence can also be redrawn as complicity: the ‘junkie’ is a ‘terminal capitalist subject’, as described above, a consumer, and complicit with pharmacopornography through his addiction to Testogel. The addictive/pornographic rhythm of the text also reveals the complicity of the reader: *Testo Junkie* is constructed in order to subject the reader to the cycle of excitation and frustration. Thus, the reader becomes bodily invested in the text. Preciado’s adherence to Haraway’s ‘feminist objectivity’ also emphasises the reader’s stake in the text. Preciado describes his testo-project as a ‘voluntary intoxication protocol which concerns the body of BP’ before admitting that the book is ‘fiction, actually’ (p. 12). Here, Preciado asserts the cultural centrality of perceived objectivity: he offers the reader trusted, scientific objectivity – making clear our investment in these narratives, before replacing it with messy, ‘situated’ subjectivity.

But the junkie is a producer, as well as a dependent, complicit consumer. *Testo Junkie* describes how addiction is productive and architectural: addiction produces edifices and sticky, viscous material resembling sperm. Addiction also produces Preciado’s techno-masculinity, which threatens, or poses a risk to, bio-masculinity. Addiction represents techno-masculinity as material and productive, as well as viscous and prosthetic. Junkies are also represented as adoptive – selecting and enhancing their bodies with bio-technologies. Thus, addiction allows for some body-agency, as well as dependency and complicity.

However, addiction also represents the vulnerability of Preciado’s biodrag. Haraway writes that (feminist) objectivity involves ‘taking risks in a world where we are permanently mortal, not in final control’ (p. 596). For Preciado, Dustan-drag is a means of control and a denial of mortality; in comparison, addiction represents his recognition of mortality, and lack of ‘final control’ (p. 596). In *Testo Junkie*, addiction represents vulnerability and the fear of over-immersion and over-identification, with pharmacopornography, masculinity and capitalism. Biodrag is framed as endlessly permeable and conveys a sense of immortality, or multiplicity. Addiction is embodied in a different, more painful, gelatinous, viscous, ‘stuck’ way: both love-addiction and testo-addiction are described as uncomfortable.

Preciado has written that pleasure is produced from the ‘constant move from one extreme to another’, from private bodies to public bodies, or between drag and addiction; but his description of addiction also details the pain inherent in the pleasurable ‘play’ – the pain of exposure, risk, addiction to masculinity, and the acknowledgement of mortality (p. 48). Preciado’s characters, or subjects, activate the play between vulnerability and permeability, between drag and addiction, in order to admit their double vision and the potential multiplicity of subjectivity. If permeability enables accelerated transformation and ‘play’ to produce pleasure and multiplicity, addiction acts as a sticky brake, slowing down the accelerationism discernible by Noys – examined in the following chapter. Addiction, unlike drag and permeability, impedes the easy play between subjectivities advocated by Preciado: addiction might be exhilarating, but it is distinctly sticky.

Haraway has written that feminism is about ‘sciences of the multiple subject with (at least) double vision’ (p. 589). Preciado’s intertwined discourses of resistance and complicity, permeability and vulnerability, biodrag and addiction represent (at least) double vision. Equally, Preciado’s practice of biodrag and writing on body fictions, and fictions of masculinity and femininity, represent his commitment to ‘the multiple subject’, and to embodied and situated processes of subjectification. Biodrag presents smooth subjectification, and the ease of multiplicity; addiction presents subjectification as risky (to bio-masculinity) and sticky. Ultimately, through discourses of addiction, Preciado defines pharmacopornographic subjectivity as materially, prosthetically performative. This materiality also makes clear the necessity, to transgender narratives and theories, of representing the materiality of trans bodies. Trans bodies, in Preciado’s writing, are mouldable plastic, but not fluid or abstract; trans bodies are ‘fictions’ but, significantly, they are body-fictions, or embodied fictions. Equally, as a framework, addiction allows Preciado to arrest conceptions of pharmacopornographic subjectivity as endlessly, easily multipliable and flexible. Addiction, as described earlier, is a ‘way of life’, thus a disposition, rather than a transcendental, revelatory state allowing for unlimited agency (1975, p. 59). Rather, in *Testo Junkie*, addiction allows for limited, but crucial, directional agency: ‘pick your poison’ (2016). Or, as Preciado describes it, pharmacopornography has established ‘*pharmakon*-subjectivities’: ‘subjectivities are defined by the substance (or substances) that supply their metabolism’ (p. 30).

## Accelerationism and Xenofeminism

‘(You’ve got to) accentuate the positive/ Eliminate the negative/

Latch on to the affirmative’.

(Mercer, 1944).

This chapter will examine Preciado’s affinities with theories of accelerationism/affirmationism and the negative. Benjamin Noys has described Preciado’s theory as ‘immersive, immanent and intoxicated acceleration’: *Testo Junkie* represents ‘immersion in the forms and forces of global capital’ (2013). According to Noys, taking testosterone signifies the ‘extinction’ of the gendered self, and Preciado’s transformation into a ‘platform for affects’ (2013). But Noys also writes elsewhere that in order to articulate a shared conception of negativity, we must insist on the ‘traversal of affirmationist theory, rather than its dismissal’ (2012, p. 13). This chapter will explore whether Preciado’s theory and practice symbolise immersion and insertion in global capital, and the extinction of a gendered self, or whether *Testo Junkie* provides the material embodiment of Noys’ theoretical ‘traversal’ of affirmationism and accelerationism (p. 13). In this examination of accelerationism and the negative in Preciado’s work, I will analyse theories of mourning and friction, work and labour, the integration of bodies and machines or technologies, *jouissance* and masochism, autogenesis, and speed.

### Misery

To begin, mourning and misery: for Noys and xenofeminists (accelerationist feminists represented by the collective ‘Laboria Cuboniks’), mourning is antithetical to accelerationism: ‘The Xenofeminist Manifesto’ states that ‘XENOFEMINISM refuses to mourn’ (2016). Noys writes that, in opposition to accelerationism or affirmationism, we must develop theories starting from misery: we must adopt ‘forms of politicisation’ that ‘recognise misery’ and the ‘friction of integration’ (2014, p. 180). Noys admits that his plan might not be ‘as fun as the montage promised by accelerationism’ but represents a ‘place to start’ (p. 180). Thus, for Noys and Laboria Cuboniks, accelerationism must, and does, abandon misery and friction in the search for ‘fun’, or hope (p. 180). ‘The Xenofeminist Manifesto’ elaborates: ‘the malady of melancholia only compounds political inertia’, ‘leftist

melancholy teaches us that [...] flashes of negation are the best we can hope for' (2016). For xenofeminists, the 'hope of recalibrating the world' is relinquished when we mourn (2016). Noys describes Preciado's writing and project as 'intoxicated accelerationism', but, inarguably, Preciado 'starts from misery' and mourning (2013; 2014, p. 180). The death of Guillaume Dustan suffuses his theory and narrative: the book opens with his death and ends with a visit to his grave. Noys writes that the immersive accelerationist 'makes a lot of their misery, but simply changed into *jouissance*' (2014, p. 176). Here, misery is configured as capitalism, a 'monstrous machine', capable of absorbing us and, in Noys' analysis, accelerationists believe: '*we must welcome this*' (p. 176). But Preciado's grief, frustration and anger are smaller and less monstrous, or tangibly monstrous: Preciado tries on Dustan's body in drag, but rejects the queer-theory-of-death bearing down on him, which he perceives to be Dustan's lineage and legacy. Preciado rejects Dustan's theory, but embraces the misery of his body and death.

Preciado writes about the juxtaposition of deaths and euphoria when he describes the glee following his partner, Despentès submitting a finished book: 'we're in a state of exhilaration common to the euphoria felt by the author who has finished a book' (p. 415). 'S' then calls and reports that a friend has died of an overdose: 'A book = a death. Each new stage begins with a death. Mourning, as the only alternative to melancholia' (p. 415). Helen Hester, an author of 'The Xenofeminist Manifesto' and a member of Laboria Cuboniks, writes that *Testo Junkie* was their 'starting point': their theory works through the implications of experimentation with subjectivity (2016). But their manifesto fails to distinguish between melancholia and mourning: melancholia is a 'malady', and we must 'refuse to mourn' (2016). In comparison, *Testo Junkie* positions melancholia as a passive state, for example, following the completion of a book, or a person. But mourning is active: for Preciado, grief-drag, the act of applying Testogel to his skin and altering his sense of subjectivity, is an active process of mourning. His mourning process is a crucial element of 'biodrag', and his pharmacopornographic theory. Preciado writes: 'VD tells me that the only thing she remembers about reading Blanchot is that the generations take shape around unavowable deaths' (p. 415). For Despentès and Preciado, deaths and mourning are moulding generations, rather than contributing to a xenofeminist fear of 'political lassitude'. Preciado wonders:

How to mourn your death [...] This book is not enough to mourn your death. I also want to tear up the earth until I find you, I want to kiss your noble death's head, I want to suck the bone of your cock

until you plunge into my digestive tract, I want to explode your anus with my best dildo, I want to take you back to the orange trees in blossom on the streets of Valencia, where you talked to me for the first time about how you had masturbated while reading the *Manifeste* (Contrasexual) (p. 416).

Preciado writes with pain, confusion and desperation about mourning expressed through movement rather than suspension or lassitude: he wants to ‘tear up the earth’, ‘kiss’, ‘suck’, ‘explode’ (p. 416). Noys describes how accelerationists ‘make a lot of’ misery before turning it into *jouissance*, omitting the ‘friction of integration’ (p. 180). But Preciado’s writing explores the material friction and misery of mourning and death: he wants to rub his body against Dustan’s, but is thwarted in his death; equally, Preciado describes how Testogel can be absorbed through skin ‘friction’. Testogel is Dustan in chemical form: he uncomfortably and awkwardly rubs up against synthetic Dustan, and synthetic death (‘I want to kiss your noble death’s head’), in the ‘friction of integration’ described by Noys, which Preciado configures as ‘biodrag’ (p. 416). Equally, for Preciado, biodrag is a process of bodily ‘integration’ with Dustan. *Testo Junkie* concludes with similar mourning-as-movement promises:

I promise you that we will come to rub our bodies against your grave, that we will come to leave the traces of our bodily fluids on the slab; like a pack of mutating wolves, we will sleep on your earth, warm your bones; and like vampires, we will come to quench your thirst for sex, blood, and testosterone (p. 427).

Here, ‘I want to’ becomes ‘I will’: the book progresses from ‘I want to tear up the earth’ to ‘I promise that we will [...] sleep on your earth’ (pp. 416; 427). Preciado has found a productive means of friction in biodrag. But Preciado also expresses Noys’ ‘misery [...] simply changed into *jouissance*’: for example, he writes that porn actresses, having been abandoned by the profession after their (average) five years of service, could change genders and become ‘courteous and anonymous customers, with hairy arms and low voices [...] a cultural reparation for having served in the formation of your basic Hairy Arm sexual masturbator’ (pp. 180; 290). She could ‘treat herself to possession of the dominant gaze’. Here, Noys’ interpretation of accelerationism: ‘*we must welcome this*’ wins for Preciado, and possible misery becomes potential *jouissance*; he writes of the ‘pharmacopornographic pleasure there’d be in seeing a technoharder version of Nina Roberts having it off with all

the porn stars' (p. 291). Misery into *jouissance* is configured as revenge, and absorption or immersion, rather than rejection.

Ultimately, stickiness, associated with misery, appears to determine whether Preciado embraces immersion in 'global capital', or the 'friction of integration' (p. 270). Noys writes that liquidity defines accelerationism, juxtaposed with a 'residual hardness'; equally, Preciado writes of liquid power infiltrating bodies, and the liquid future of microprosthetic technologies (p. 263). Noys also writes of the accelerationist practice of 'liquefaction' that solidifies to activate force, before diffusing into liquid force and dispersing (p. 263). Preciado provides an embodiment of this process when he writes of the gelatinous nature of love and misery, and being imprisoned in viscous materials: 'finding how to get out means [...] changing the ground, solidifying liquefied feelings to get a foothold, or evaporating them so you can breathe. It's the time for understanding that that transubstantiation of affect won't happen today' (p. 255). Here, Preciado acknowledges the slowness of sadness: 'getting out' is 'difficult' and produces 'anxiety' and 'sadness' (p. 255). He attempts the liquefaction of misery but is gelatinously trapped. Significantly, the substances Preciado promises to rub against Dustan's grave are gelatinous rather than liquid: testosterone is a 'gelatinous technology', blood is 'dark' and 'gelatinous' in *Testo Junkie* – menstrual blood is depicted, rather than violently-spilled liquid blood (p. 77). To begin with, for Despentès and Preciado, their sex, love, gel testosterone and lubricant 'impregnate' the air and this new environment 'reduces the index of friction, limits conflict, stress, difference, thins the walls of the ego', but this same environment traps them in aspic (p. 402). Noys emphasises the ease and slipperiness of liquefaction: from solidification to diffusion; in comparison, Preciado describes the difficulty of finding a foothold, and understanding the slow speed of transubstantiation, or bodily change. Noys writes of the importance of paying attention to the aesthetics of 'moments of friction'; Preciado explores the *materiality* of friction (p. 271).

When Halperin writes of the Fire Island widows, he notes that their dramatic performances of grief could be seen as parodic, a 'spoof' of performative identities and a parody of gender roles and 'sentimental seriousness' (2012, p. 179). Or as Noys might write: misery into masochistic *jouissance*. But Halperin reminds us that these Italian widows were all men – *who had lost partners and friends to AIDS*. The punchline here is loss, rather than 'they were men'. Noys writes of Preciado: 'I'm not so much interested in the politics of this particular experience in terms of gender', but gender and sexuality are necessary interlocutors in discussions of Preciado and accelerationism (2013). Dustan was HIV

positive, and Preciado's biodrag, however immersive and parodic, is inspired by loss: loss is his punchline, rather than insertion and immersion in parodic masculinity and capitalism. Misery underlies the Fire Island widow performances, and misery similarly galvanises Preciado's sticky (rather than liquid) testo-project. Noys also writes that Preciado's acceleration embodies the 'extinction' of the 'gendered self', and his emergence as an affect platform (2013). But Preciado's biodrag represents the intensification and embodiment of a very gendered self – specifically, Dustan's selfhood and gender.

Noys writes that 'moments of friction encode the tension accelerationism wishes to dissolve'; friction, misery and mourning are all bound up with tension (p. 271). Noys, in his description of Preciado's writing and project as 'immersive, immanent and intoxicated acceleration' ignores the juxtaposition of tension in his writing (2013). Tension and awkwardness both characterise Preciado's experience of taking Testogel: he writes, 'I can't stand my own sweat when I'm on it', his sweat is 'sickly sweet', and his body feels like it belongs to someone else (p. 67). Although he feels strong and sexual after the testosterone takes effect, he also feels the desperate tension associated with the 'female cultural agenda' clashing with his testosterone-infused body (p. 95). Here, again, Preciado provides the reader with a material representation of Noys' theory of liquefaction. Preciado wants his body to dissolve and liquefy: to become pure sexual energy and strength. Instead, and rather than propositioning his neighbour, he frenetically cleans his flat. The solid and liquid regimes clash, disciplinary and pharmacopornographic, proving the tension that Noys writes is absent in accelerationism. The tension in Preciado is both bodily and structural: his body is both the site of clashing hormones and tension, and represents power regime tension and juxtaposition.

But misery is more than a feeling in Preciado: he writes of structural misery in a description of the global circulation of drugs:

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 (p. 33).

Noys writes of the necessity of both recognising misery, and detaching ourselves from misery-making products and processes. Equally, the extract above confirms that, for Preciado, misery is more than a feeling: misery is structural. ‘Megacities of misery’ knot together in tense concentrations of capital, gradually extending themselves through the diffusion of various drugs and fluids (p. 33). For Preciado, detachment from misery is almost impossible, but its infiltration and alteration is plausible.

Through Noys and accelerationist writing, it becomes clear that accelerationism is dependent on eschewing misery, mourning and theories of negation. Accelerationism also fails to distinguish between melancholia and mourning, and is reliant on liquefaction and smoothness. Crucially, according to Noys, accelerationism is defined through a lack of structural tension. Preciado is attracted to the accelerationist possibility Noys describes as misery-into-*jouissance*, which, in *Testo Junkie*, is represented through physical pleasure derived from systemic misogyny. But *Testo Junkie* also describes Preciado’s inability to access smoothness and liquefaction: instead, the text is suffused with mourning and tension. In Preciado, misery is structural, material, and galvanises his testo-project.

### ***Jouissance and Labour***

Noys writes that accelerationists consider capitalist work to be a site of ‘extreme and perverse enjoyment’, bound up with pain – a kind of masochistic *jouissance*; Noys adds that accelerationism encourages our immersion in this painful pleasure (p. 24). In accelerationist theory, technological labour is often declared to be both hegemonic and exciting (‘The Accelerate Manifesto’). Preciado similarly writes that our contemporary economy runs on the following ‘raw materials’: ‘excitation, erection, ejaculation, and pleasure and feelings of self-satisfaction, omnipotent control, and total destruction’ (p. 39). Sex, erections and ejaculations centre pharmacopornographic labour and production. For Preciado, pharmacopornographic subjectivity and capitalist economies are galvanised by blood, testosterone, antibiotics, alcohol, tobacco, morphine, cocaine, Viagra and serotonin, among others. Preciado writes of ‘wet work’, implicitly referring to semen (p. 294). Thus, accelerationists and Preciado appear to share an understanding of entwined work, pleasure and pain.

Noys writes that he is ‘not so much interested’ in the politics of Preciado’s experience in relation to gender (2013). But Preciado’s writing genders the *jouissance* Noys

identifies as accelerationist: the ‘extreme and perverse enjoyment’ embraced by accelerationists in Noys’ conception is distinctly male (p. 24). In *Testo Junkie*, between male and female, but not identifying as non-binary or trans, Preciado has no access to this *jouissance* without illegally smuggling Testogel through his dealer – an option not available for, or known to, all cis or trans women, or non-binary people. Crucially, Preciado genders accelerationist *jouissance* associated with labour, which this section explores through: contraception, pornified labour, and sex work, or ‘wet work’ (p. 294).

Firstly, contraception: Noys writes that if we are ‘forced to labour’, then ‘accelerationism tries to welcome and immerse us in this inhuman experience’; he adds that accelerationists inform us that ‘traditional labour is over’ (p. 24). Preciado emphasises the material products of pharmacopornographic labour: semen, blood and testosterone, for example, rather than, exploring our immersion in technological labour – following some accelerationist theory<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, Preciado dates the commencement of pharmacopornographic control of subjectivity to the tests of the contraceptive pill in the 1930s: according to Preciado, ‘traditional labour’ was over a long time ago (p. 24). Equally, in comparison with Noys’ claim that accelerationists try to welcome us in the ‘inhuman’ experience of accelerated labour, Preciado describes the misery experienced by women as a result of pharmacopornographic control, and forced immersion in pharmacopornography (p. 24). Early birth control clinics in Puerto Rico ran extensive sterilisation programmes: in 1907, the US implemented public policy that allowed the state to ‘sterilise unwilling and unwitting people’ (p. 179). In 1937, the ‘Eugenics Board’ passed a law which allowed for the identification and sterilisation of the ‘insane’, feeble-minded’, ‘diseased’ and ‘dependent’ (p. 179). Preciado writes that Puerto Rico was ‘not a stranger to forced sterilisations’ (p. 179).

Katherine McCormick, an early funder of the contraceptive pill, mentioned the specific challenge associated with finding a ‘cage of ovulating females’, in *Testo Junkie* Preciado describes how this description makes clear the connection between ‘imprisonment and scientific control’ (p. 180). McCormick stated, with discernible frustration: ‘Human females are not as easy to investigate as are rabbits in cages’ (p. 180). Puerto Rico, used for various colonial experiments, provided the necessary ‘cage’. Large-scale federal housing programmes provided families with accommodation, and in turn, vast numbers of women participated in the first pill trials. The women involved in the trials were expected to swallow

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Benjamin H. Bratton’s *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty* (2016), The MIT Press.

pills every six or eight hours, inject the compound or insert it as a suppository; they also took their own basal temperatures, vaginal smears and collected urine regularly. Thus, women involved were often, inevitably, confined to their houses. Here, *Testo Junkie* exposes the often ‘inhuman’ experience of labour. Preciado describes the colonial history of the contraceptive pill, and the use of Puerto Rican women as ‘rabbits in cages’, administered with (what we now know to be) carcinogenic doses of progesterone (p. 180). Puerto Rican women were used as guinea pigs in the service of the potential *jouissance* of white American women. Arguably though, Preciado’s description of the juxtaposition of new housing and contraceptive pill trials also describes the imposition of a kind of masochistic *jouissance*: the pleasures of a new house in exchange for the misery of the perpetually monitored and self-regulated body.

Equally, Preciado’s explorations of the later contraceptive pill emphasise their embodiment of masochistic, self-inflicted *jouissance*. Preciado writes that after the gradual revelation that high doses of progesterone and estrogen are carcinogenic and cause cardiovascular problems, ‘such findings do nothing to lower consumption of the Pill (in fact its consumption increased exponentially beginning in the 1970s)’ (p. 209). Preciado also notes the decline in the bioavailability of testosterone (the proportion of testosterone able to have an active effect) in women taking the pill. The decline in bioavailable testosterone, according to different measures, is between forty and sixty percent, often resulting in a corresponding drop in a woman’s sexual desire. Preciado cites a Boston University study that noted the decline in bioavailable testosterone and recommended microdoses of testosterone to counteract the decline and to ‘increase the sexual functioning of female consumers of the pill’ (p. 210). In 2016, a doctor at a British GPs’ conference also urged the provision of testosterone on the NHS for women with low libidos (2016). Here, again, the gendering of *jouissance* is clear: testosterone, associated (although not synonymous) with masculinity, provides the chemical, material manifestation of joy, sexual energy and strength; in comparison, increased doses of chemical femininity cause low sexual desire, and occasionally, cancer.

Accordingly, Preciado urges women to take testosterone, to claim ‘raw materials’ of pharmacopornography that are often forbidden to them (p. 39). Noys writes that immersive accelerationists ‘make a lot of their misery, but simply changed into *jouissance*’, which Preciado enacts here (p. 264). Equally, Preciado encourages former porn stars to take testosterone as ‘cultural reparation’ and change genders in order to ‘treat herself to possession of the dominant gaze’ and ‘have it off’ with all the porn stars (p. 291). Here,

Preciado effects the transformation of potential misery into *jouissance*, or joy. Ultimately through exploring a material, bodily form of labour, ‘wet work’, Preciado peels apart masochistic joy, and genders masochism female and ejaculatory joy, male – the latter representing the engine of pharmacopornographic economies (p. 294). Thus, Preciado urges women to access their chemical counterparts.

In discussion with Alexander Galloway, Noys writes that our collective task is to ‘articulate and politicize pleasures that resist and interrupt our immersion in contemporary capitalism. This requires neither the appeal to a ‘pure’ outside nor the demand for complete immersion, but a practice that engages with the contradictions and violence we confront’ (2014). Inarguably, Preciado engages with the contradictions and violence associated with contemporary capitalism, which he often associates with masculinity. In Noys’ analysis of *Testo Junkie*, he ignores the possibility that traditional masculinity is resisted and interrupted through Preciado’s immersion in, or infiltration of, its synthetic twin. Contradictions (why were women taking contraceptives in huge numbers when it had been proven to be carcinogenic?), violence (the neo-colonial imprisonment of Puerto Rican women in their homes, like ‘rabbits in cages’) and friction are present in *Testo Junkie*. Through his dismissal of the role of gender in Preciado’s immersive practice, Noys fails to recognise the role of masculinity in perpetuating the violent mechanisms of contemporary capitalism, and the potential for trans men, cis women and non-binary people to infiltrate, as well as deconstruct, its systemic hold.

Ultimately, our conceptions of work are inevitably gendered, and capitalism, both historical and contemporary, is built on masculinity. Accelerationism, through valorising abstract, immaterial, networked knowledge, equally valorises masculinity’s stranglehold on contemporary culture. In the majority, prominent accelerationists are men: Nick Land, Nick Srnicek, Alex Williams, Benjamin H. Bratton. But the recent feminist collective described above, Laboria Cuboniks, is similarly immersed in abstract, technological practice. They write that science must be ‘redefined as the only true suspension of inequality’, but add that ‘today it is dominated by masculine egos’, thus is ‘at odds with its own true function’ (2016). Here, they appear to acknowledge their gendered contribution to accelerationism. But the following manifesto claim unsettles our assumption: ‘XF is genderless, sexless and inhuman, unbound by physical, biological, natural and historical limitations’ (2016). Once more, accelerationism, even accelerationist feminism, appears to be bound to imagined genderless, networked spaces which, by virtue of their perceived neutrality, are fundamentally masculine – embodying ‘masculine bravado’, as McKenzie Wark describes

Kodwo Eshun's accelerationist text, *More Brilliant Than The Sun* (2017). Helen Hester has written that *Testo Junkie* was their 'starting point', but Hester's valorisation of abstract conceptions of 'science' and 'reason' ('reason as the [...] engine of emancipation') are in opposition to Preciado's theory and practice (2016).

Accelerationists typically valorise technology, scientific practice, networks and professionalised knowledge. And, as McKenzie Wark notes, 'latter-day accelerationists tend to be rather ignorant about their own past', in their quest to accelerate to a utopic future (2017). Preciado, despite his immersive testo-project, makes clear the gendered nature of work, and our historical societal debt to women and colonised people: 'it's impossible to imagine the rapid expansion of industrial capitalism without the slave trade, colonial expropriation and [...] unpaid sexual services historically performed by women [...] If interest were applied to the debt for sexual services and colonial plundering, all women and colonised peoples on the planet would receive an annuity that would allow them to spend the rest of their lives without working' (p. 122). Preciado emphasises the colonial background of pharmacopornography through his descriptions of Puerto Rico and trials of the contraceptive pill.

Equally, and in contrast to accelerationism, Preciado's 'work' embraces amateurism, self-experimentation, and medical practices associated with women rather than men: specifically, witches. Preciado writes that the persecution of witches through witch hunts was part of a process of 'eradicating knowledge and lower-class power, while simultaneously working to reinforce hegemonic knowledge of the expert', which, he writes, became 'indispensable' to the growth of capitalism (p. 149). He adds that 'female caregivers [...] represented a threat to the professional orders' (p. 151). Both here, and above, in relation to the pill trials, Preciado makes clear that pharmacopornography emerged through the suppression of women and colonised people, and that any creative resistance must involve reclaiming their practices – he compares his testosterone gel with the ointments ritualistically applied by healers and witches, despite its association with, and emergence from, pharmacopornography. Ultimately, in comparison with accelerationism, Preciado's writing and project are embedded in women's history and practices, rather than what Alexander Galloway describes as a 'kind of technophilic, network affirmationism' (2017). Noys writes that accelerationists have a tendency to 'fetishize abstraction' (2017). This abstraction is discernible in the 'Xenofeminist Manifesto': 'xenofeminists must become attuned to the language of architecture as a vocabulary for collective choreography—the coordinated writing of space'; 'The Accelerate Manifesto' is equally abstract:

‘Accelerationists want to unleash latent productive forces’, ‘The future must be cracked open once again, unfastening our horizons towards the universal possibilities of the Outside’ (2016). Accelerationist writing on work often focuses on the abstract circulation of knowledge, communication and information. Preciado, in place of an economy centred on the ‘cooperation of brains’, posits that pharmacopornography is based on material, messy ‘masturbatory cooperation’ (p. 37).

Furthermore, accelerationism insists that ‘work’ must be wholly invested in reclaiming the future, thus is often tethered to accepting the dominance of contemporary capitalism: ‘the future has been cancelled’ cries ‘The Accelerate Manifesto’, ‘The future must be cracked open’ (2016). Noys writes that their acceptance of contemporary cultural structures ‘does not really consider how they are shaped by capitalism’ (2017). In comparison, Preciado writes that his book is a process of auto-decapitation: he wants to ‘cut off [my] head that had been molded by a program of gender, dissect part of the molecular model that resides in me’ (p. 424). *Testo Junkie* is the ‘trace left by that cut’: Preciado peers inside his body and explores its shaping by gender binaries embedded in pharmacopornography (p. 424). His body is depicted as a microcosm of contemporary capitalism, which he decapitates in the process of writing his book.

In comparison with cracking the future open, Preciado’s understanding of resistance work is notably small-scale: his testo-project forms part of his desired *microprosthetic* revolution. By contrast, ‘The Accelerate Manifesto’ notes that ‘each individual type of political action becomes blunted and ineffective over time as the other sides adapt’ – de-territorialisation inevitably becomes territorialisation in a capitalist system (2016). Arguably, Preciado relies on these adaptive properties of capitalism and pharmacopornography, and their gradual acceptance of trans men and cis women through processes of infiltration. Akin to ‘The Accelerate Manifesto’, ‘The Xenofeminist Manifesto’ declares the need for ‘large-scale’ labour and ‘collective social organisation’ (2016). Hester, in a review of *Testo Junkie*, questions Preciado’s ‘small-scale interventions’ and his belief in self-experimentation, noting that the book leaves little space for imagining how his practice can be ‘scaled up’. Although Hester does acknowledge Preciado’s own admission that ‘romantic auto-experimentation carries the risk of individualism and de-politicisation’ (p. 37). Ultimately, in relation to work, accelerationism is committed to large-scale political practice, often mired in abstraction, and appears ignorant of its gender biases, and the history of capitalism, specifically the debt of capitalism to the labour of women and colonised people. Accelerationism is equally ignorant of the need for a politics which unbinds itself

from hegemonic masculinity, rather than embedding it further through calls for accelerating ‘science’, ‘reason’, ‘networks’ and ‘technology’.

Accelerationism valorises work associated with masculinity: technological, scientific, networked and professionalised work. According to Noys, accelerationism also defines work through *jouissance* – thus associating it with both pain and pleasure. Accelerationist writing also expresses the need for macro, structural resistance. In comparison, Preciado makes visible the materiality of labour performed by women. He also makes clear the gendering of both labour and *jouissance* through his analyses of Testogel and the contraceptive pill. *Testo Junkie* describes how the pleasure of *jouissance* is gendered male, and the pain, female. In Preciado’s writing, work is defined through amateurism, symbolised by witches, and self-experimentation. In comparison with accelerationists, Preciado describes the necessity of microprosthetic resistance work.

## **Machines**

Preciado’s affinity with accelerationism is perhaps discernible in the integration of ‘man’ and ‘machine’, advanced by Futurists such as F.T. Marinetti and Valentine de Saint-Point. Noys suggests that accelerationists attempt to solve the problem of work by reintegrating it into the machine; he writes of the ‘fantasy of integration’, the ‘“man-machine” (note the gendering), that might at once save and transcend the labouring body’ (p. 78). Noys writes of the ‘contempt’ for women displayed in the valorisation of the phallic, ‘hard, mechanised’ body against the ‘soft, liquid, and organic’ feminine body (p. 90). Here, Noys acknowledges the masculinism inherent in accelerationism.

Preciado writes of the shift from ‘soft machine(s)’, or bodies with ‘electric skin’, following Burroughs and Haus-Rucker and Co., characteristic of the emergent epoch of ‘hot psychotropic punk capitalism’, to ‘neither an organism nor a machine’ – rather a ‘technoliving system’ (p. 33). The contemporary body Preciado describes implodes the soft/hard, liquid/mechanised. The proliferation of warships and cyborgs were juxtaposed with, and inspired, the first waves of accelerationist theory, and the ‘man-machine’ (p. 78). But, for Preciado, pharmacopornography is defined by softer bodies. Preciado describes a new pharmacopornographic binary: in *Testo Junkie*, women’s bodies are harder, more integrated with defined machines, and tied to disciplinary power, rather than contemporary techno-biopower. Contraception and pornography delimit these bodies: women are ‘efficient, non-reproducing machine(s)’, and ‘ejaculatory mechanisms’, ‘lumpen-

proletarianized cyborgs’, in comparison with the ‘soft, liquid, organic’ feminised body Noys describes as antithetical to accelerationism (p. 315).

In comparison with Noys’ conception, for Preciado, the soft, liquid and synthetic are dominant, and masculine: Testogel, sperm and lubricant are the raw materials of both pharmacopornography and pharmacopornographic resistance. Here, again, we see the accelerationist ‘contempt’ for women: but not displayed through Noys’ description of the ‘usual armoured trope of erecting the hard, phallic and mechanised male body over and against the feminised’ (p. 90). We see the inversion of the materiality of masculine and feminine, but the continued valorisation of masculinity. In 1912, Valentine de Saint-Point wrote a manifesto for ‘Futurist Women’ in which she suggested women were equal to men, but both men and women should, in Noys’ words ‘take the brute as their model’: ‘the solution to misogyny is to join an equality of brutality, confirming the phallic hardness of the machine as destination for both genders’ (p. 91). Preciado playfully affirms the centrality of this ‘phallic hardness’ in his celebration of dildos, but his preferred solution is for women to join the equality of synthetic testosterone (p. 91). He encourages women to take Testogel and benefit from its ‘political surplus values’: the ‘destination’ for both genders, or all genders, is wetness, or sticky gel – in the form of sperm, lube and testosterone (p. 237).

But Preciado’s fondness for dildos perhaps conflicts with this interpretation of accelerationism-beyond-integration-of-man-and-machine. Preciado writes in *Testo Junkie* of ‘nerve endings innervating’ his dildo, which is ‘super erect’ (p. 329). For Preciado, the dildo is a tool of ‘contrasexuality’, which he describes in his *Contrasexual Manifesto*. Marx writes of subordinating labour rather than being subordinate to it: ‘it is the iron man confronting the man of flesh and blood’ (1994). Noys notes that communist accelerationism attempts to fuse these men, in order to alter their status, from ‘appendage of the machine’ to controlling and moving the machine and ‘reworking capitalist technology to communist ends’ (p. 165). Preciado’s use of the dildo in his pharmacopornographic project is smaller scale than ‘reworking capitalist technology to communist ends’ (p. 165). Significantly, accelerationism intends the dissolution of man’s status as ‘appendage of machine’, whereas Preciado firmly valorises the appendage as a genderless, prosthetic, moveable machine. In Preciado’s conception, bodies need to be understood as moveable and shareable rather than finding their power in ‘subordination’ of technology: ‘prosthetic masculinity can circulate and be shared’: ‘my desire, my plastic cock [...] can be shared without the pleasure becoming any less powerful’ (p. 277).

Preciado's trans-feminist perspective emphasises sharing: of hormones, dildos and knowledge. Preciado writes of the importance of the 'shared knowledge attached to social rituals', adding that sharing 'multiplies desire, sex and gender' (p. 149). He notes that masculinity depends on shared performative codes that are 'transmitted from body to body via semiotic signs and material rituals' – these performative codes can be learnt, he argues, in environments like drag king workshops (p. 371). Accelerationism similarly depends on the sharing of semiotic and performative codes between men and machines, but, crucially, not with women. In Roger Zelazny's accelerationist novel, *Lord of Light*, he writes that accelerationism is a 'simple doctrine of sharing' – but between gods and men: 'It proposes that we of Heaven give unto those who dwell below of our knowledge and powers and substance. This act of charity would be directed to the end of raising their condition of existence to a higher level, akin to that which we ourselves occupy. Then every man would be as a god, you see. The result of this, of course, would be that there would no longer be any gods, only men' (1967, p. 172). Significantly, accelerationist practices are shared between men. *Testo Junkie* interrupts and infiltrates these performative, shared, accelerationist rituals. But, if accelerationism reproduces through shared performative masculinity, does the admittance of trans men and cis women substantively alter its foundations and its ability to effectively reproduce, or simply entrench its dominance?

Noys describes the accelerationist 'solution' as: 'going hard to go soft, in a peculiar mix of machismo and the valorisation of feminised immersion' (p. 437). Here, Preciado undeniably provides the embodiment of Noys' interpretation of accelerationism: he combines the parodic machismo of the plastic prosthetic dildo with the sticky, immersion of falling in love with Despentés, juxtaposing sticky immersion with his new affinity with prosthetic masculinity. However, Noys writes that accelerationism ignores the friction and tension inherent in contemporary capitalism: Preciado's writing expresses the friction and tension of integrating bodies and various prostheses.

Ultimately, Noys writes of the accelerationist fascination for the machine, and for the integration of man and machine. Noys notes the disdain for women displayed through the valorisation of the 'hard, mechanised' body against 'soft, liquid' bodies associated with femininity (p. 90). Accelerationism also depicts the need to share performative and semiotic codes between men and machines – although not with women. In comparison, Preciado writes of a power reversal: for Preciado, the hegemonic body is now liquid, soft and synthetic. In *Testo Junkie*, women are aligned with cyborgs, machines and mechanisms.

Preciado also writes of the need to share, but to share bodies and prostheses, as well as performative codes.

### **Sex Machines**

Noys' description of 'machinic' accelerationism also focuses on the integration of eroticism into the labouring machine: 'desire infuses the machine' (p. 217). Noys writes that most work is experienced as 'profound boredom and pointlessness', in opposition to exciting accelerationism (p. 215). Thus, Noys notes, accelerationists proffer a Sadeian, 'utopian merging of libidinal acceleration with an acceleration of labour that is repetitive and machinic' (p. 217). As desire 'infuses' the labour machine, routines are ruptured, and work could '(finally) be sexy', which Noys adds, also implies that sex is 'worklike' (p. 218). Thus: in Noys' conception, accelerationism desires the fusion of sex and repetitive machines in order to rupture boring labour processes. Here, we see the acceleration of both sex and labour, and their incitement by accelerationists to become more exciting.

In comparison, Preciado notes the contemporary absence of a sex machine: 'there is no machine capable of performing fellatio assembly-line style that can supplant the biomouth, or any robotic masturbator capable of distracting the attention of customers who can get a hand job from a humanoid for ten euros in the Parisian bois de Boulogne' (p. 312). Preciado cites Angela Davis' reminder that technological advances in the domestic sphere failed to radically emancipate domestic workers (p. 312). He adds that corporal practices like sex work and domestic work will never be 'entirely absorbed by technical production', according to Marx's conception of 'private services' (p. 312). Ultimately, for Preciado, sex is already 'worklike', and emancipation has to be from, rather than into, the exploitation of 'potentia gaudendi' or 'orgasmic force' (p. 41). Equally, sex is not machinic, technological or abstract in *Testo Junkie*, it is embodied: domestic and sex work is mostly performed by 'unpaid female bodies or by bodies in a precarious work situation, those for whom access to other kinds of employment is checked by immigration laws' (p. 312). If, for Noys, accelerationists are committed to the infusion of desire into work and labour, Preciado reminds us that women have always performed machinic sex labour. Noys writes that accelerationism promises that work could '(finally) be sexy', but Preciado's writing emphasises that sex is already work, and women are doing it (p. 217). Contrary to accelerationism, Preciado writes that the 'sex-worker-becoming-cyborg' refers to the

cultural production of the body of the sex worker rather than technological advances in sex work. He notes:

The ideal sex worker, the high-tech cock-sucking machine, is a mouth treated with silicone that is silent and politically subaltern and belongs to an immigrant cis-female or transsexual without access to administrative identity and full citizenship. The sex machines of the third millennium are living bodies denied entrance into the political sphere, deprived of public discourse, stripped of union rights and strikes, and lacking medical care or unemployment benefits [...] the worker is becoming a sexual biomachine (p. 314).

In comparison with Noys' assertion that accelerationism desires the integration of man and machine, and of sex and work, Preciado writes that the real, contemporary, perceptible integration is of subaltern, precarious bodies and our conception of the sex worker. Noys fears that accelerationism 'enchant(s)' sex as something 'accelerative and machinic' that 'disguises the boredom of desire' and moves away from the 'iterative reverie of fantasy' (p. 220). This perspective of sex work is fundamentally masculine and ignores the inevitably gendered power dynamics at play: rather Preciado's 'sexual biomachine' prompts us to realise how collective (predominantly masculine) desire is dependent on precarity (p. 314). Here, Preciado asserts that our iterative fantasy is reliant on women's bodies, subaltern bodies and precarious bodies: rather than moving away from iterative fantasies and sex-as-boredom, *Testo Junkie* exposes and deconstructs our status as pharmacopornographic sex workers.

Noys and Laboria Cuboniks also emphasise the accelerationist power of technology in relation to sex: 'The Xenofeminist Manifesto' 'promotes' the 'real emancipatory potential of technology' which 'remains unrealized' (2016). Noys writes about the future machinic nature of sex under accelerationism. In comparison, Preciado writes of the power of *representation* as a technology: power is located in bodies and spaces, but also in the 'collection of representations that render' bodies 'sexual and desirable'. Elucidating the importance of representation, Preciado quotes Houellebecq on male, Western desire:

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 (p. 48).

Noys writes about accelerationism potentially disguising the 'boredom' of desire, but Preciado, using Houellebecq, explores how boredom forms part of the pornographic rhythm we already absorb and perform (p. 220). Houellebecq's character finds his work boring, his boredom provides the impetus for the fulfilment of his desire: frustration-ejaculation-capital-frustration. Frustration or boredom brackets desire – its repetitive rhythm representing us as the 'biomachines' Preciado describes. Crucially, Houellebecq's description neatly encapsulates how the hegemonic subject is a white, heterosexual male body who lusts after bodies represented as 'sexual and desirable': 'pauperized sexual services (often in bodies codified as female, childlike, or racialized)' (p. 48). Again, Preciado provides us with intersectional embodiment in contrast with accelerationist's abstract, masculinist interpretation of technology and bodies.

Noys notes that accelerationism depends on the integration of eroticism with machines – in order to make both more exciting. For xenofeminist and accelerationist philosophy, technology is emancipatory, and sex is 'accelerative' (p. 220). Thus, sex can work in the service of accelerationism. Preciado, by comparison, describes a 'sexual biomachine' which emphasises our reliance on precarious bodies (p. 314). He describes how sex, predominantly for women, is already defined through work and caring responsibilities. *Testo Junkie* describes the need to identify and interrupt our exploitation-through-pleasure, rather than accelerate it. Preciado also emphasises the constructive power of representation: specifically, the way we represent precarious bodies as particularly desirable. For Preciado, pharmacopornographic subjectivity is constructed through our collective representation as 'sexual biomachines' (p. 314). Pharmacopornography emphasises sex-as-work.

## **Autogenesis**

The 'phallogocentric project of autogenesis' also features prominently in accelerationist theory: autogenesis describes the development of living things from non-living matter (2007, p. 171). 'The Xenofeminist Manifesto' writes that we need 'new perceptions and actions unblinkered by naturalised rigidities', they note our collective opportunity to 'generate new worlds' (2016). Their commitment to creation is tethered to a masculinist

discourse established through repressing or disavowing ‘feminine’ dependence. But Noys also writes that accelerationism is characterised by the fundamental capitalist fantasy of ‘self-engendering production’ – fetishizing capital and accepting current societal conditions as the precondition for new production (p. 70). Accelerationists appear to promote both narratives: the desire to begin from a heterotopic ‘Outside’ where ‘new’ is possible, and the acceptance of the dominance of contemporary capitalism.

Examining Preciado and accelerationism through autogenesis may be helpful, here. Autogenesis can be defined as self-organisation, or spontaneous order: a process in which order forms out of disorder – spontaneously, rather than by design. Autogenesis is also known as abiogenesis, describing life emerging from non-living matter – known as spontaneous generation in Greek philosophy. Aristotle’s *History of Animals* describes the process: ‘with animals, some spring from parent animals according to their kind, whilst others grow spontaneously’ (2014, p. 852). Biogenesis, reproduction through living matter, rather than spontaneous production, replaced autogenesis by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Autogenesis can also mean making a vaccine from bacteria already present in a patient’s body – a practice common in the early twentieth century, and relevant in the context of Preciado’s self-experimentation. The sections below examine autogenesis in Preciado in relation to spontaneous order, the replication, or reproduction of systems, and inoculation.

### Spontaneous order

According to Butler, believing we can construct something out of nothing, forming ‘new’ perceptions and actions, and dissolving ‘naturalised rigidities’ represents a denial of collective vulnerability and dependency (2016). In comparison, accelerationism fetishizes newness: ‘The Accelerate Manifesto’ describes the need for a ‘radically new’ vision, a ‘new left’, a ‘new platform’, ‘new infrastructure’ and a ‘new form of action’ (2013). But, described above, as Noys writes, it also appears to ‘take as fact’ capitalism’s ‘fundamental fantasy of self-engendering production’ (p. 70). He notes that accelerationists are ‘an archetypal instance of the fetishists of capital’ (p. 70). He writes that the construction of new societies and ideologies can only take place ‘on the ground of what exists’, but adds that ‘this does not entail accepting all that exists’ (p. 70). Self-engendering production is closely aligned to the definition of autogenesis as ordering disorder.

The accelerationist ‘fantasy’ of spontaneous ‘self-engendering production’, or ordering of disorder, implies a lack of purpose. In comparison, Preciado’s

instrumentalisation of selfhood and bodies for the purpose of resistance indicates the necessity of intervention and disruption – or disordering order. Preciado describes his body as a ‘platform’ and his testo-project as ‘hot psychotropic punk capitalism’ (p. 33). In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado’s body is representative of pharmacopornographic capitalism. In his introduction to *Testo Junkie*, Preciado describes his text as ‘self-theory’ (p. 11). His first chapter opens with learning of his friend’s death and filming himself inserting two dildos, which he refers to as ‘making a self-portrait’ (p. 19). His testosterone ‘protocol’ is alternately described as ‘self-hypnosis’, ‘self-intoxication’, ‘self-design and ‘self-experimentation’ (pp. 95; 143; 118). For Preciado, following Foucault, pharmacopornography has shifted its power from disciplinary punishment to self-medication, observation and regulation, and our resistance, or invention, must correspondingly shift.

Here, a difference is discernible, between self-intervention, or self-intoxication, and the spontaneous self-engendering of production: a distinction between interventionist practice and spontaneous production. Noys writes of the accelerationist perception of an acephalic, or headless, dispersed capitalism. In comparison, Preciado writes that his book could be described as a process of ‘autodecapitation’: parodying autogenesis and self-engendering production, in *Testo Junkie*, capitalism decapitates itself (p. 424).

Accelerationists also appear to practice what Butler describes as a ‘linguistic form of autogenesis’: Butler writes about the ‘rather magical act’ of using the expression ‘we the people’ to gather groups of people together, ‘enacting assembly’ (2015). Through the form of a manifesto, xenofeminists and accelerationists practice this ‘magical act’ of linguistic autogenesis: ‘we do not want’, ‘we must develop’, ‘we must be done with’, ‘we must build’, ‘we have no interest in’ (2013; 2016). Their use of ‘we’ both presuming and constructing a community, or ‘enacting assembly’ (2015). The act of assembling is absent: linguistic autogenesis can be described as a shortcut, or ‘spontaneous order’.

In comparison, Preciado writes about the *practice* of assembling. He films himself taking testosterone and shares it with ‘hundreds of transgender mutating bodies’ (p. 21). He writes extensively on drag king workshops, which helped him overcome depression and ‘endemic loneliness’ in New York (p. 364). He demonstrates his enthusiasm for assembling: drag king workshops are a system for the ‘construction of identity techniques developed by queer and trans micropolitics’ (p. 364). He writes of the ‘psychopolitical magic’ of drag king workshops, its ‘ritual dimension’, but, most crucially, that these workshops are ripe for replication: it is ‘urgent to work to proliferate drag king workshops as spaces [...] to decode the dominant gender grammar, invent new languages. Creating *global* counterhegemonic

networks for reprogramming gender’ (p. 364). Crucially, Preciado writes of concrete spaces and material bodies, in comparison with what Noys describes as accelerationism’s ‘domain of abstraction’ (p. 72).

On first reading, Preciado’s promotion of drag king workshops is puzzling: *Testo Junkie* advocates taking testosterone and presages a ‘hot punk psychotropic capitalism’, a techno-futuristic, high-tech molecular revolution – rhetorically in affinity with accelerationism (p. 33). In comparison, drag king workshops are almost startlingly low-tech. But Preciado’s promotion of these ‘identity techniques’ reveals his political process as slow and collaborative, rather than autogenetic (p. 364). Preciado takes testosterone, but he connects to a network of similarly mutating bodies and shares his techniques; he writes a book about how to take testosterone, he runs drag-king workshops and writes of his admiration for witches, and the tradition of women-healers, in comparison with the professionalization of medicine. Preciado valorises amateur and low-tech practices. He writes of adding ‘molecular prostheses’ to his ‘*low-tech* transgender identity comprised of dildos, texts and moving images’: he uses his high-tech testosterone in collaboration with low-tech queer and trans micropolitics (p. 16).

Ultimately, accelerationists would be, and have been, disappointed with Preciado’s attachment to communities and localism (see Hester above on the small scale of Preciado’s work). ‘The Xenofeminist Manifesto’ is an attempt to correct Preciado’s localism, but his attachment to community production is not accidental. Preciado’s rejection of autogenesis demonstrates a feminist commitment to making clear our vulnerability and dependency – in Butler’s tradition. He recalls earlier movements and techniques, uses them, and cites them. Sara Ahmed writes that citation is ‘feminist memory’: citation is ‘how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way when the way was obscured because we deviated from the paths we were told to follow’ (2015). ‘The Xenofeminist Manifesto’ and ‘The Accelerate Manifesto’ are both devoid of citations, thus of feminist memory, and appear to emerge fully formed – in the ‘autogenetic’ accelerationist model.

In comparison, *Testo Junkie* is Muñozian: Muñoz writes of ‘working on and against’ as a strategy, which is neither ‘buckling under the pressures of dominant ideology’ through assimilation or identification nor ‘attempting to break free of its inescapable sphere’ through utopianism (or accelerationism) (1999, p. 11). Muñoz also writes that ‘working on and against’ is an attempt to ‘transform a cultural logic from within, always labouring to enact permanent structural change, while at the same time valuing the importance of local or

everyday struggles of resistance’ (p. 11). Thus, following Muñoz, Preciado’s appreciation and encouragement of drag king workshops makes sense: in the context of his broader, structural politics of gender. Preciado is attuned to the necessity of permanent structural change, while acknowledging the equal importance of micropolitical, ‘everyday’ change. Accelerationism is autogenetic through its simultaneous investment in newness and its shortcut past the process of assembling – through its repudiation of local politics.

### Reproduction

Thus, ‘self-engendering production’ has an affinity with the structure of autogenesis (p. 70). And ‘self-gendering production’ describes capitalism solving its own problems iteratively: autogenetic capitalism encodes repetition and reproduction. Noys writes that the crucial question is ‘how can we create change out of the bad new without replicating it?’ (p. 71) He adds that the accelerationist answer is by ‘replicating more’, leading to the ‘implosion’ of capitalism (p. 71). In comparison, in a recent article for ‘Art Forum’, ‘Baroque Patriarchy: Reproduction’ Preciado writes of the global naturalisation of reproduction, its treatment as ‘ahistorical’, and notes that it has become ‘urgently necessary to denaturalise reproduction’ in its various forms (2018). In earlier chapters, I analysed Preciado’s implicit emphasis on queer, performative, parodic reproduction in *Testo Junkie*, in contrast with biological and pharmacological reproduction – thus the reproduction of pharmacopornographic capitalism. His recent article makes explicit his position.

But my earlier analyses referenced Edelman’s theories of negation in relation to reproduction. Perhaps, rather than an affinity with Edelman’s negation of reproduction, Preciado’s performative reproduction embodies Muñoz’s futuristic queerness, a ‘warm illumination of a horizon of potentiality’ (2009, p. 1). In Muñoz’s conception, queerness is a hopeful ‘longing’, a ‘mode of desiring’ to ‘feel beyond the quagmire of the present’ (p. 1). Preciado’s mourning and initial isolation after Dustan’s death, and the lack of queer relationality expressed through his loss of his queer partner, is aligned with Edelman. But *Testo Junkie* concludes with an expression of new relationality: Despentes and Preciado visit Dustan’s grave and Preciado writes, ‘your burial is our marriage’, and promises to rub their shared queerness all over his grave: ‘we will sleep on your earth, warm your bones [...] quench your thirst for sex, blood and testosterone’ (p. 427).

Muñoz has written that communal mourning is mourning as a ‘whole’: as a ‘contingent and temporary collection of fragments that is experiencing a loss of its parts’

(1999, p. 73). *Testo Junkie* expresses Preciado's loss of a 'part', a fragment that tied him to queerness, queer politics, and queer futures (through imagining their future children, for example), despite Dustan's 'snuff politics' (pp. 73; 345). But *Testo Junkie*'s conclusion also expresses Muñoz's 'warm illumination' of 'potentiality' and relationality, through its focus on his imagined marriage to Despentés and their shared promises (p. 1). Preciado's recent article on reproduction is similarly hopeful and relational: he writes of the promise of 'learning': 'a process that could be considered the cultural analogue of genetic recombination'. Learning is 'our individual and collective way of mutating within brief time spans and adapting to rapid change' (2018). He adds that we can 'apply the principle of cultural recombination to our strategies of producing and reproducing life, so as to transform our technologies of power and (politically) mutate' (2018). Finally, he ends on hope: 'this new digital and biotech fascism can also be the last' (2018). Bodily and culturally, we possess the tools to reimagine our technologies of power and masculinity. He wonders whether we can 'depatriarchalize' and 'decolonize' our institutions through denaturalising reproduction (2018).

Through its affinity with autogenetic replication, accelerationism is inherently at risk of reproducing our current system, and of replicating the bodies, bodily labour, and cultural strategies currently at play. Interestingly, and perhaps unsurprisingly, 'The Accelerate Manifesto' pays no attention to reproduction, focusing instead on generation and production through acceleration. In comparison, 'The Xenofeminist Manifesto' makes clear their refusal to 'submit to the drudgery of labour, productive and reproductive alike', elsewhere they decry 'unequal access to reproductive tools' and write of engineering an economy that 'liberates reproductive labour' (2016). Here, Preciado and xenofeminism share a suspicion of a cultural focus on reproduction, and, specifically, its power over women. Hester, of Laboria Cuboniks, has found 'some elements of Accelerationism quite frustrating, not least the fact that it was somewhat oblivious to much of the feminist work on science and technology that struck me as a key part of its lineage. There was nearly fifty years of work – at least! – that was being overlooked!' (2018) Hester also mentions that xenofeminism was produced, in part, by 'feminist irritation' in relation to accelerationism (2018). Here, xenofeminism exposes the accelerationist lack of 'feminist memory', and repetition-as-reproduction – of existing hierarchies.

Xenofeminism (from 'xeno' meaning strange, other or foreign) and Preciado do share a commitment to the proliferation, or reproduction of strangeness, and to the infiltration of feminism with strangeness. Hester has written that Preciado represented their

‘starting point’: ‘Preciado identifies the antagonist as willing to become someone else, so through experimentation is playing with testosterone to see what it does to subjectivity and identities’ (2016). Here, Preciado and xenofeminists share an affinity with experimentation, play, and Haraway’s ‘sciences of multiple subjects’. Preciado recently provided a blurb for Hester’s monograph on xenofeminism: ‘Blunt, uncompromising, and often controversial. This is the missing link between radical feminism from the 1970s and contemporary cyborg, trans and queer languages of emancipation. Love it, hate it, but read it’ (2018). Preciado perhaps shares more theoretical ground with xenofeminism than masculinist forms of accelerationism which ignore reproductive work, and sex work.

Ultimately, accelerationism is committed to replication and reproduction, which involves the possibility of re-inscribing contemporary capitalist power and its hierarchies. Accelerationist writing describes the inevitability of repetition and reproduction. Srnicek and Williams fail to attend to the problem of reproductive labour. In comparison, xenofeminists write of the need for liberation from ‘reproductive labour’ (2016). Preciado also writes of the ‘urgent’ need to denaturalise reproduction, while, simultaneously, proliferating queerness and strangeness, or difference. However, Preciado’s ‘hot psychotropic punk capitalism’ is at equal risk of replicating capitalist hierarchies as accelerationism. Both accelerationists and Preciado share a commitment to interruptive repetition, but repetition all the same. A crucial difference remains: accelerationism is expressed through abstraction; Preciado’s theory is grounded in embodiment.

### Inoculation

Autogenesis can also be defined through inoculation: autogenesis can refer to a vaccine developed from bacteria present in a patient’s body. In my first chapter, I discussed Preciado’s use of testosterone in the context of the *pharmakon*: simultaneously poison and cure, following Derrida (texts and visual signs as *pharmaka*) and, Stiegler (testosterone-as-adopted-technology). Similarly, for accelerationists, technology and capitalism are *pharmaka*. Here, Preciado and accelerationists share a techno-landscape: through testosterone applications, Preciado experiments with ‘hot, psychotropic, punk capitalism’ and its ‘microprosthetic mechanisms of control of subjectivity’ (p. 33). In *Inventing the Future*, Srnicek and Williams footnote (rather than name) Shannon Bell and Preciado and write of the importance of an ‘interventionist approach to the human’: these interventions can range from ‘individual bodily experimentation to collective political mobilisations

against restricted images of the human, and everything in between’ (p. 149). Srnicek and Williams note that we must engage in ‘revising the human both theoretically and practically’ and describe Bell and Preciado’s contributions to interventionism in a footnote as ‘fascinating accounts of bodily experimentation’ – ignoring their theoretical and philosophical contributions (p. 149). Here, the authors structurally imply that the practical business of intervention lies with trans/women’s bodies: the theoretical world-building is the province of accelerationist men. Equally, the trans/woman’s body is the epicentre of both vaccine and disease: both ‘restricted image of the human’ and intervention – epitomising ‘fuck you yourself’ (p. 266).

But, despite the gendered implications of the theoretical/practical intervention binary, Preciado, Laboria Cuboniks, Srnicek and Williams share an interest in bodily experimentation. And for Preciado, autogenetic inoculation, or *pharmaka* are apt definitions for his initial testo-project: testosterone is present in cis women’s bodies, in smaller amounts than cis men’s bodies, and *Testo Junkie* experiments with synthetically increasing his dosage. Preciado emphasises: ‘testosterone isn’t masculinity’, and his self-experimentation demonstrates that masculinity is a social construct rather than a biological imperative (p. 141). But *Testo Junkie* flirts with characteristics of dominant masculinity activated by Testogel – for example, Preciado experiences feelings of increased strength and sexual energy. In comparison, a recent article for *Libération* clarifies his relationship with masculinity:

En lisant Weber avec Butler, que la masculinité est à la société ce que l’état est à la nation: le détenteur et l’usager légitime de la violence.

Cette violence s’exprime socialement sous forme de domination, économiquement sous forme de privilège, sexuellement sous la forme de l’agression et du viol [...] Comme homme-trans, je me désidentifie de la masculinité dominante et de sa définition nécropolitique (*Libération*, 2018).

In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado writes:

My tongue is like an erectile muscle. I feel that I could smash the window with my fist. I could leap to the balcony opposite and fuck my neighbor if she were waiting for me with her thighs spread (p. 95).

But his recent article reminds us of his status as a trans man, specifically, distanced from both dominant heterosexuality and masculinity:

Je suis aussi loin de votre esthétique de l'hétérosexualité qu'un moine bouddhiste lévitant à Lhassa l'est du supermarché Carrefour. Votre esthétique de l'ancien régime sexuel ne me fait pas jouir. Ça ne m'excite pas 'd'importuner' qui que ce soit. Ça ne m'intéresse pas de sortir de ma misère sexuelle en mettant la main au cul d'une femme dans les transports en commun [...] L'esthétique grotesque et meurtrière de l'hétérosexualité néropolitique me débecte. Une esthétique qui re-naturalise les différences sexuelles et situe les hommes dans la position de l'agresseur et les femmes dans celle de la victime (douloureusement reconnaissante ou joyeusement importunée). (*Libération*, 2018).

Here, perhaps, we see a movement away from testosterone-as-*pharmakon*, as inoculation or cure for dominant masculinity-as-disease, to be administered to cis women, for the purpose of infiltration, revenge, satisfaction or pleasure. Instead, Preciado forcefully reminds the reader of the violence of the contemporary aesthetics of masculinity. He also clarifies the distinct nature of queer desire:

Il est possible, à l'intérieur de la fiction théâtrale de la sexualité, de désirer lécher des semelles de chaussure, de vouloir être pénétré par chaque orifice, ou de chasser l'amant dans un bois comme s'il était une proie sexuelle. Cependant, deux éléments différentiels séparent l'esthétique queer de celle de l'hétéro normation de l'ancien régime: le consentement et la non-naturalisation des positions sexuelles. L'équivalence des corps et la redistribution du pouvoir (*Libération*, 2018).

In *Testo Junkie*, Preciado's sensation of his tongue as an erectile muscle and his assertion of violent and sexual desire are followed by: 'But this time, like an energizing biosupplement being activated within a female cultural agenda, the testosterone compels me to tidy up and clean my apartment, frenetically, all night long' (p. 95), Crucially, he writes 'this time': disappointment, or frustration, is discernible (p. 95). In comparison, in 'Lettre d'un homme trans à l'ancien régime sexuel', he asserts his distinct status as trans man, and his affinity with a politics and aesthetics of *queer* desire (*Libération*, 2018). Ultimately, as he affirms in *Testo Junkie*, despite his narrative contradictions: 'testosterone isn't masculinity', and bodily interventions must interpret *pharmaka* through going 'the way of the witches', he writes (pp. 141; 151). Witches, for Preciado, symbolise a women's tradition of amateurism, experimentation and shared knowledge: care and healing, rather than violence and

domination, and the power dynamics associated with shared cultural construction rather than imposed biological determinism.

Thus, both accelerationists and Preciado have an affinity with *pharmaka* politics, and body-experimentation, or ‘revising the human’ (2015, p. 149). But accelerationist politics uses body-intervention as a tool for the ‘implosion’ of capitalism; in comparison, Preciado writes of *pharmaka* enabling the proliferation of queered bodies – and allowing for sharing and experimentation (p. 71). Srnicek and Williams appear to value body-intervention, but in the context of macropolitical work. Preciado’s microprosthetics are, by contrast, deliberately micro. For Preciado, using inoculation as a tool reflects the body-matrix of pharmacopornography. In comparison, body-intervention is assigned a footnote in Srnicek and Williams’s book on ‘Inventing the Future’: bodies are a secondary concern (2015). Projects like Preciado’s are considered ‘small scale’ and ‘ephemeral’, which are ‘ultimately unable to challenge the larger structures of the neoliberal economic system’ (2015, p. 20). For Preciado, pharmacopornography operates through the organisation of pleasure and drugs through bodies, thus theories of inoculation and *pharmaka* are necessarily central to his politics. Here, inoculation demonstrates the difference in scale between Preciado’s theory and accelerationist writing. Ultimately, Preciado’s theories align with autogenesis-as-inoculation: an interventionist approach to an interventionist economic structure. In comparison, accelerationism aligns with autogenesis defined through newness and replication.

### **Acceleration and Speed**

Finally, accelerationism has historically been associated with investment in speed, or in contemporary theory, ‘navigational acceleration’ (Noys 2013, ‘Intoxication and Acceleration’). Modern accelerationism advocated by Srnicek and Williams rejects the centrality of speed in older forms of accelerationism, which Noys recognises as a helpful corrective. Srnicek and Williams endorse technological advancement alongside tentative acceleration capable of navigation, which sounds paradoxical: ‘acceleration which is also navigational, an experimental process of discovery within a universal space of possibility’ (2013). But acceleration means an increase in speed, or the capacity to increase speed, in contrast with the hesitant, qualified ‘experimental process of discovery within a universal space of possibility’ – which means very little either as statement or action-plan (2013). Noys also advances some political and theoretical problems associated with their

repudiation of speed: Srnicek and Williams propose an accelerationist politics at ease with the revolutionary potential of technology and capitalism, but, for example, discuss their discomfort with High-Frequency Trading – in which algorithms trade at a level imperceptible to humans. Ultimately, Noys writes that in this new form of accelerationism, ‘humans remain too slow – too fleshy – to push beyond certain temporal, perceptual and quantitative barriers’ (2014, p. 124).

‘Humans remain too slow’ is perhaps demonstrated symbolically in *Testo Junkie* when Preciado watches a pornographic video which features the Hairy Arm – representative of contemporary, intrusive masculinity. The Hairy Arm is responsible for disembodied poking and grabbing, but also for fast-forwarding the porn. He writes:

... all we can see are her moving breasts, a little of her hair, her swinging head, and the hairy arm gripping her neck. The guys watching the cassette don’t miss a pixel of it. On the outside of the screen of the monitor, the same hairy arm is pressing fast-forward and saying, “That’s more than enough; figure out the rest yourselves.” The images go by in fast motion; the girl’s body careens faster and faster, attached to the hairy arm (p. 407).

Here, the Hairy Arm is both a central character in the pornographic scene and controlling its narrative. The ‘guys watching the cassette’ are symbolic of the male voyeur, diligently, obsessively (they ‘don’t miss a pixel of it’) consuming porn (p. 407). The woman’s body is subjected to speed: her body ‘careens faster and faster’, attached to the mechanism for altering both speed and narrative – the Hairy Arm (p. 407). The Hairy Arm also controls the pleasure of the voyeurs: “That’s more than enough; figure out the rest yourselves’, epitomising the pornographic imperative ‘fuck you yourself’ (p. 407). The pornographic narrative and characters are well-established: the voyeurs present simply adhere to the orchestrated pornographic rhythm and structure – excitation-frustration-capital, and repeat. In this case, the Hairy Arm fast-forwards to the conclusion:

He presses “play,” returning the video to normal speed. The girl doesn’t try to simulate an orgasm. But she imitates the expression of a bitch in a porn movie, the kind of face she appears to have seen a thousand times and has no trouble simulating. Pressing the fast-forward button again, Hairy Arm explains, “They’re ready to do anything to get a part (p. 407).

The Hairy Arm almost implies that the actor is capable of fast-forwarding her body for the role, of technologically speeding up her simulated climax. Here, he demonstrates the inexhaustible pornographic body, made more tireless by editing and fast-forwarding. Lev Manovich has written that the ‘speed with which new technologies are assimilated in the United States makes them ‘invisible’ almost overnight, they become an assumed part of the everyday existence’ (2004, p. 2). But if new technologies assimilate quickly, increased speed has become equally invisible and assimilated.

*Testo Junkie* also illuminates the difference between acceleration and speed in contemporary capitalism. In a chapter on sex work, Preciado quotes a 2006 mail-marketing campaign for counterfeit Viagra: ‘Would you like to have a stronger ejaculation? Come on in: Every man wants it [...] What flares up fast, extinguishes soon. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight’ (p. 300). Preciado notes that the marketing campaign emphasises that pharmacopornographic masculinity ‘isn’t defined by its capacity for masturbatory erection but, more precisely, by the difficulty of maintaining the erection’ (p. 301). Equally, Srnicek and Williams write of the difference between speed and acceleration: ‘We experience only the increasing speed of a local horizon, a simple brain-dead onrush rather than an acceleration which is also navigational, an experimental process of discovery within a universal space of possibility. It is the latter mode of acceleration which we hold as essential’ (2013). If we imagine that Srnicek and Williams were discussing the possible effects of counterfeit Viagra, acceleration represents perpetual motion, discovery and pleasure – a sustained surge forwards, rather than localised, short-term bursts of speed. Similarly, Preciado writes of the importance to both pharmacopornography and masculinity of sustaining pleasure. Thus, an equivalency between masculinity, pleasure, acceleration and capitalism is discernible. Acceleration appears to be the broader mission of pharmacopornography – although with bursts of speed structured in its pornographic rhythm.

Thus, Srnicek, Williams and Preciado analyse the impact of acceleration, and the distinction between acceleration and speed. They also share a suspicion of capitalist speed. Following Deleuze and Guattari, Srnicek and Williams write: ‘what capitalist speed deterritorialises with one hand, it reterritorialises with the other. We may be moving fast, but only within a strictly defined set of capitalist parameters that themselves never waver’ (2013). Similarly, Preciado writes that our bodies are both spaces of political control and centres of agency and resistance – subject to relentless, fast de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation. He writes of a ‘fast-expanding pharmacopornographic sexopolitical

model' (p. 220). In response to this accelerated de-territorialisation followed by re-territorialisation, Srnicek, Williams and Preciado share a commitment to the re-appropriation of technological apparatuses: 'The Accelerate Manifesto' notes the 'productive', 'revolutionary' and 'untapped' nature of technology (2013). Preciado writes of our dependence on technological prostheses: 'We've closed our eyes, but we continue to see by means of an array of technologies, political implants' (p. 344). He adds that it is 'only through the strategic reappropriation of these biotechnological apparatuses that it is possible to invent resistance, to risk revolution' (p. 344).

Srnicek, Williams and Laboria Cuboniks are (mostly) grounded in work and theory associated with masculinity, demonstrated above, while Preciado finds women's work and practice to be foundational to his testosterone project – which has an affinity with aspects of accelerationism. However, Preciado, despite his reliance on women's histories and practices, sometimes shares with accelerationism a tendency to de-gender bodies in relation to contemporary capitalism: 'capitalism foresaw the advantages of working with a malleable [...] body' (p. 301). He indicates that all bodies under capitalism are equally valuable if they possess *potentia gaudendi* or orgasmic force, and notes that all bodies penetrable/penetrating (p. 302). By contrast, in relation to accelerationism specifically, I would argue that men, who are broadly globally dominant, control acceleration (representative of pharmacopornographic power), while women are subject to speed (symbolic of short-term, disciplinary, pornographic rhythms). Imagine, for example, a man driving a boat, and a woman water-skiing behind it – attached to the boat, unable to steer: she is both more vulnerable and experiences a bumpier ride.

Ultimately, both Preciado and accelerationists demonstrate a commitment to 'navigational acceleration' – they explore the manipulation of tendencies, and our ability to direct *pharmaka* (2013). Equally, they share an understanding of prostheses as crucial and 'revolutionary' (2013). For Preciado, these prostheses relate to the body; for accelerationists, helpful prostheses are more machinic – for example, computers and robotics.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude: Noys' cursory analysis of *Testo Junkie* and his easy dismissal of the politics of Preciado's experience in terms of gender represents a problem with his criticism of accelerationism. Gender and sexuality are important interlocutors in discussions of accelerationism and negativity. Noys also writes of the significance of friction in

contemporary philosophy, and, as this chapter demonstrates, Preciado's theory provides us with grief, pain, stickiness and plenty of friction. This chapter also explored how accelerationism attempts to reimagine labour, but often avoids discussion of gendered work – specifically in the context of the division of material and immaterial labour. Noys and accelerationists discuss sex and machines, but not the dependence of masculine desire on precarious female labour. Preciado shares more common ground with xenofeminists than Srnicek and Williams, but he does share 'The Accelerate Manifesto's' commitment to technological re-appropriation. In an examination of accelerationism in Preciado's work, this chapter has analysed mourning, labour, the integration of bodies and machines, *jouissance*, masochism, reproduction, autogenesis, speed, and acceleration. The object of my analysis was to explore whether Preciado's writing represents the 'extinction' of a 'gendered self' and 'immersion and insertion' in global capital expressive of accelerationism (2013). Preciado's writing is immersed and inserted in global capital, but *Testo Junkie* inarguably represents an exposition of the gendered self, and an assertion of its pivotal role in contemporary capitalism. Preciado's writing traverses accelerationism and theories of the negative in order to establish a technologically-literate trans-feminism based on embodiment.

Ultimately, accelerationist narratives are invested in universalist projects. As Srnicek and Williams write: 'the future must be cracked open once again, unfastening our horizons towards the universal possibilities of the Outside' (2013). An accelerationist politics is theoretically and practically established in opposition to 'identity' politics and smaller scale political interventions – often described as local or folk politics in accelerationist writing. Accelerationists and xenofeminists embody an historical leftist suspicion of micropolitics and 'single issue' politics. This division is often gendered: accelerationism is male-dominated discourse, thus the accelerationist frustration with identity politics maps onto older Enlightenment-era narratives.

In 'The Accelerate Manifesto', Srnicek and Williams write that their project is aligned with 'the legacy of the Enlightenment: to the extent that it is only through harnessing our ability to understand ourselves and our world better (our social, technical, economic, psychological world) that we can come to rule ourselves' (2013). But Enlightenment progress was represented through rationality, associated with masculinity. In comparison, femininity was associated with chaotic passion, bodies and irrationality. Katerina Deligiorgi writes that Adorno and Horkheimer describe Enlightenment rationality as 'instrumental and calculative, punitive and oppressive, gender biased and monolithic' (2012, p. 161). She also

notes: ‘To answer these criticisms it is clearly not enough simply to call for more enlightenment in the hope that its emancipatory promise will eventually become realised’ (p. 161). But the accelerationist dismissal of folk politics resembles an Enlightenment attachment to a monolithic, masculinist progress-narrative, and assigns gender politics, for example, the status of mere distraction.

Accelerationist universalism effects what McKenzie Wark describes as a flattening of difference: ‘Certain accelerationist comrades have resorted to rather shopworn modes of abstracting from differences. We need rather a new kind of abstraction, one which does not flatten such differences by simply reasserting the old patriarchal norms. Asking dad to plan a future for us isn’t going to fly’ (2013). Intersectional feminism acknowledges the need for understanding gender, race and class as interwoven issues. Contemporary forms of accelerationism and xenofeminism write of the need to accelerate to a classless, genderless and raceless society. But, paradoxically, accelerationist ‘flattenings’ only serve to make abstract specifically embodied challenges. Srnicek and Williams write of the need to engage in ‘revising humans theoretically and practically’, but fail to describe the specific embodied revisions necessary to the accelerationist project (2015, p. 149). They appear to leave the ‘interventionist’ work to women, and trans people, taking the reins of the strategic, theoretical scaling-up resistance work (p. 149).

But Wark also writes that accelerationists like Williams and Srnicek are ‘right to ask that we think at scale again. The enemy certainly is’ (2013). This presumes an agreed ‘enemy’. For Preciado, the enemy is internalised: our bodies are agents of pharmacopornography, thus, our own bodies are, through Wark’s logic, our ‘enemies’. Preciado notes the temptation of representing the relationship between the body and power according to ‘a dialectical model of domination/oppression’ as if it were a ‘unidirectional movement in which [...] power from the outside infiltrates the obedient body of individuals’ (pp. 207-208). In comparison, Preciado writes that power ‘already dwells *inside*’ (p. 208). For Preciado, pharmacopornography is a body-based regime of power, which is technologically dispersed and networked, but operating internally, and bodily. According to *Testo Junkie*, we need to problematize the way we think about enemies: patriarchal norms are asserted through nostalgia for an ‘enemy’ – representative of disciplinary regimes of power. The accelerationist desire to ‘scale it up’ represents nostalgia for a macro form of oppression – representative of disciplinary rather than pharmacopornographic power. *Testo Junkie* emphasises that pharmacopornographic power is micro, and that resistance must be correspondingly micropolitical. For contemporary accelerationists, ‘size matters’: scale has

replaced speed as a defining characteristic. In comparison, *Testo Junkie* makes clear the microprosthetic nature of pharmacopornography.

## Conclusion

‘Theory can do more the closer it gets to the skin’, Sara Ahmed (2017, p. 10).

Between 2015 and 2018, during my research for this thesis, trans people have become more visible, as Shon Faye notes: Caitlyn Jenner publicly transitioned, Laverne Cox was on the cover of *Time*, Daniela Vega became the first trans woman to present at the Oscars, and her film, *A Fantastic Woman*, won an Oscar (Faye, 2018). Writer, Paris Lees appeared on ‘Question Time’ and in *Vogue*. Shon Faye writes that visibility is important: ‘the received wisdom is that if people can see trans people they will learn to tolerate us, then to accept us and then to embrace us’ (2018). But violence against trans people has increased with increased visibility: there was a forty-five percent rise in transphobic hate crime in 2017 (2018). Faye also writes that ‘trans men and non-binary people are still woefully ignored’ (2018). Ultimately, Faye adds, ‘I’m not convinced this sort of trickle-down liberation is enough’ (2018).

In 2017, ‘The Museum of Transology’ opened in Brighton, an exhibition collecting trans items from across Britain: for example, boxes of Testogel, train tickets associated with transitioning memories, lipsticks, hospital gowns and NHS appointment letters. The exhibition proved popular and is touring Britain and looking for a permanent home. The exhibition is designed to imitate a home, with bathroom cabinets, dressers and wardrobes. In a review, Cicely Proctor writes of an ‘air of homeliness’ (2017). Exhibition curator EJ Scott writes that the exhibition represented a ‘proactive attempt to halt the erasure of trans lives from the heritage sector’: the exhibition is committed to the visibility of trans people. But Scott also writes of ‘the power of objects to tell stories’ (2017). ‘The Museum of Transology’ is equally committed to the materiality of trans lives. Preciado’s emphasis on ‘somatic fictions’ and ‘living political fictions’ similarly makes clear the materiality of transness (p. 152).

Scott notes the ‘everyday’, ‘frequently mundane’ nature of the objects, countering the common portrayal of trans lives through spectacle (2017). In 2015, Preciado described Caitlyn Jenner’s transition: ‘There is a discursive tradition that presents the M2F transgender subject as someone moving from a sovereign form of masculinity (often represented by sport or the military) to become a female media icon, as if both ends of the gender binary should be emphasized to make the transition part of a heroic act’ (2015). Preciado writes of the

media's predilection for using transgender people to naturalise, rather than disturb, gender binaries. But he also describes the discursive convention of portraying transgender people through 'heroic' transitions. The Transology exhibition also confronts common depictions of trans people: the objects 'challenge the obsession and fetishisation of trans bodies; they also 'hit back at the celebration of people who are regarded as "successes" in terms of "passing", which infers there are those who "fail"' (2017). 'The Musuem of Transology' and *Testo Junkie* both depict transitioning as slow and often mundane, as well as exciting, frustrating and material. They eschew transcendent gender binaries for prosthesis-based constructive work – bodies and subjectivities are shaped through lipsticks and representations (being called the right name, for example), Testogel and new shoes.

For Preciado, pharmacopornography and transitioning both require prostheses: Viagra, tritherapy, Testogel, the pill, Prozac, Ritalin, cortisone, silicone. *Testo Junkie* expresses our shared reliance on prostheses: the voyeur uses binoculars, the sex worker uses the pill and dildos, the biodrag king and the junkie use Testogel. They share the experience of subjectification through prostheses. For Preciado, agency in pharmacopornography is accessed through the substance you ingest, 'subjectivities defined by [...] substances': 'Prozac subjects, cocaine subjects, alcohol subjects, Ritalin subjects' (p. 35). But although pharmacopornographic subjectivity is defined through prostheses, Preciado writes that 'pharmacopornographic business is the *invention of a subject* and its global reproduction' (p. 36). Pharmacopornographic subjectification resembles transitioning: there is no 'heroic act', big reveal, or 'truth about sex', rather there is 'sexdesign' (p. 35). 'Sexdesign' refers to people rather than things: pharmacopornography is defined through effective subjectification and the reproduction of processes of subjectification. Prosthetic subjectification is the engine of pharmacopornography.

Understandably, *Testo Junkie* is narratively and theoretically occupied with the depiction, construction and embodiment of masculinity. Future work on pharmacopornographic subjectivity might further explore women's pharmacological subjectivity: through contraception, for example. Authors have approached contraception through sociological, medical and journalistic histories: *The Birth of the Pill: How Four Pioneers Reinvented Sex* (2015), *Sweetening the Pill: Or How We Got Hooked on Hormonal Birth Control* (2013), or *On the Pill: A Social History of Oral Contraceptives* (1998). But these studies of contraception are dominated by a binary: contraceptives represent either liberation or dubious pharmacological control. Despite their affirmation of the cultural centrality of contraception, these histories fail to explore the philosophical production of

women's subjectivity through contraception. In an opinion piece on hormonal contraception for *The New York Times*, Sindha Agha wrote: 'my side effects made me four different people' (2018). Future research on pharmacological subjectivity might examine contraception as a subjectivity matrix – using Preciado's theoretical insistence on the continuity of prostheses, bodies and subjectivities.

Ultimately, this thesis hopes to have explored, for the first time in detail, a crucial trans-feminist text: a text which explores our affinities with drugs and pornography, and analyses our ability to use our addictive dispositions to direct the *pharmakon* towards resistance, or invention. Preciado's writing negotiates queer theory's commitment to gender fluidity and resistance, feminist theory's commitment to the iterability and performativity of gender, and trans theory's affirmation of the materiality of trans bodies. Preciado explores his own affinity with masculinity, and 'plays' between binaries, as he writes in *Pornotopia: dressed/undressed, inside/outside*, he straddles the disciplinary and pharmacopornographic regimes of power, and embeds his bodily ambivalence in his text. His book has been used as a manual, a manifesto, and an articulation of queer-trans-feminism, despite his partial repudiations of queer and feminist theories.

His assertion that *Testo Junkie* is about self-experimentation rather than transitioning is read differently since his transition. But, crucially, his adoption of trans masculinity is not heteronormative, gender-normative reterritorialization. Transphobic theorists write that being transgender reinforces binaries, but *Testo Junkie* makes clear the radical nature of body-praxis, body-agency and body-autonomy. As Preciado writes: 'Aujourd'hui, chaque fois que quelqu'un m'appelle Paul, c'est un acte de coopération qui devient un acte de résistance politique.' (2015). 'Trans' represents resistance to pharmacopornography, and infiltration of hegemonic 'somatic fictions' (p. 152). *Testo Junkie* asserts the materiality of transness and, through making visible his body and theory, reminds the reader of hidden and lost trans histories. In my experience, *Testo Junkie* is read avidly by undergraduates and postgraduates studying queer and feminist theory, but it remains mostly absent from university courses, contributing to the erasure of trans histories.

Preciado recently wrote: 'Je parle comme transfuge de genre, comme fugitif de la sexualité, comme dissident (parfois maladroit, puisque manquant de codes préétablis) du régime de la différence sexuelle' (2018). Preciado expresses and exposes 'maladroit', messy, frustrating, uncomfortable, exciting, erotic and oppressive gender and sexual codes which structure pharmacopornography and pharmacopornographic subjectivity. Sara Ahmed writes that 'theory can do more the closer it gets to the skin [...] theory itself is often

assumed to be abstract [...] to abstract is to drag away [...] we might then have to drag theory back' (2017, p. 10). Preciado biodrags theory back to the skin.

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