4

PERFORMING CITATIONS AND VISUALIZING REFERENCES

Drawn Bibliographies, Sculpted Theory, and Other Mimetic Moves

All reading, every reading, is a desire for image, an intention to re/present, which gives us hope.
—Nicole Brossard, *The Aerial Letter*

CITATION AS ARTISTIC MATERIAL: SCULPTURE, VIDEO, MIXED MEDIA

In the previous chapter I discussed the ways writers and artists engage the autotheoretical impulse in their work by placing citations—a standard academic practice of referencing the ideas of others in order to back up one's own hypotheses or theories—in highly visible places in a work. Instead of the reference becoming obscured in a footnote or an endnote, the eye is directed toward it: it forms a considered part of the mise-en-page or the mise-en-scène. In these works, the artist or writer draws attention to the citation as a constitutive component of the work, with the citation becoming a core part of the process of reading a story, watching a video, or listening to a track. In this chapter I turn to work by Cauleen Smith, Allyson Mitchell, and Deirdre Logue, where similar practices of citing theory in the context of autobiographical works are at play—but now in different media and at different scales. I consider the tendency for visual artists to render references as physical materials in autobiographical art, a practice related to the performative citations within memoiristic or postmemoiristic writings studied in the previous chapter.

In recent contemporary art, many artists have chosen to reproduce books of theory and critical literature by hand, whether as 2D drawings or 3D replications. From American artist Cauleen Smith's *Human_3.0 Reading List* for Black survival in Black Lives Matter–era America, where the artist haptically reproduces books by such writers as Frantz Fanon, Sylvia Wynter, and W. E. B. Du Bois to comprise a hand-drawn reading list that serves as "armor" for Black folks, to queer settler Canadian artists Mitchell and Logue's human-sized replications of queer theory books using gluten-free papier-mâché as part of a larger installation on queer futurity, these works fit within the broader autotheoretical turn in contemporary art. How do artists' practices transform these texts' meanings, and what kinds of relationships are fostered between the artist's life, the cited text, the audience, identification, and community?

In the hands of artists like Mitchell and Logue, who work from explicitly autobiographically informed and embodied studio practices, a book of theory, a bibliography, or a reading list is extended beyond its purely indexical function to connote something affective and communal, desirous and difficult, in the context of an art installation or a performance

for video. Mitchell and Logue are both collaborators and lovers/partners who cofounded the multisited space FAG (the Feminist Art Gallery) out of their home in 2010, riffing on the model of short-term queer feminist collectives demonstrated by the New York–based LTTR collective.[1] I consider their practice of autotheoretically processing queer theory, and its histories and futurities, through their collaborative practices as artists and curators, looking to their recent collaborative exhibitions to consider the mimetic impulse of reproducing theory citations in the context of artwork. The question of identity—its fixity, its malleability—and its relationship to autotheory comes in near the close of the chapter. The relationships I discuss can become named identities whose discursive rise and fall threatens the integrity of the self—with the example of "lesbian" coming to the fore with Mitchell and Logue's recent work in autotheorizing questions of lesbian death, discursively speaking, in relation to queer belonging.

In queer feminist practices, the politics of community is often an important part of the work—at least in theory. One way of assuaging the ethical issues involved in autotheoretical work is through collaboration. Lauren Berlant and Kathleen Stewart's *The Hundreds* (2019) engages collaborative writing as a political and theoretically self-reflexive practice in which the shared act of writing autotheoretically is organized by the constraint of writing hundred-word pieces. Berlant's and Stewart's writing has roots in a specific theoretical genealogy of queer feminist affect theory and in adjacent literary practices such as poetry, with examples including Hiromi Goto and David Bateman's co-authored text on alcoholism, *Wait Until Late Afternoon* (2009).[2] By working collaboratively with a beloved other, or another kind of collaborative partner and friend, the voice and agency of that other is incorporated more agentially: the work is created, in part, by them, typically in active and ongoing conversation and negotiation. Similar to practices of lateral citation, collaboration encourages cross-pollinating and more equal playing fields or footings. While Nelson expresses her anxiety around shared authorship in *The Argonauts*, as we saw in chapter 3, Mitchell and Logue embrace collaboration—even with its potential difficulties, charged as collaboration may be for those working together in addition to living and sleeping together (all these forms of intimacy that cohere in autotheoretical work).

Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue, *I'm Not Myself At All*, 2015. Multimedia art exhibition at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, ON (installation view). Photos: Agnes Etherington Art Centre. Courtesy of the artists.

Mitchell and Logue maintain active individual and collaborative artist practices in addition to living together as lovers/spouses and organizing as feminist art collectors, curators, educators, and community organizers with FAG. They work in media like performance for the camera, self-imaging practices like soft sculpture self-portraits, and text and manifestos. Mitchell works as a professor of women's and gender studies, teaching courses in queer theory and affect, alongside her long practice of making self-reflective, fat-femme art. It is not surprising that ideas of research factor into her work, often explicitly—though the ways she incorporates theory

into art is often very "lowbrow," rendering elevated theory something accessible in a way that might be described as queer-femme maximalist kitsch. It is in their collaborative work as artists, though, that the autotheoretical thrust of their work comes to the fore. To take this up, I consider two exhibitions of their work as artist-collaborators, exploring them in relation to queer possibility and futurity: the 2014 exhibition *We Can't Compete* at the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, and the 2015 exhibition *I'm Not Myself At All* at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre.

Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue, *I'm Not Myself At All*, 2015. Multimedia art exhibition at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, ON (installation view). Photo: Agnes Etherington Art Centre. Courtesy of the artists.

We Can't Compete features works across media, including video and sculptural works, sound, found object sculptures, and two crocheted text banners, one reading "We Can't Compete," the other "We Won't Compete," a message of solidarity that seeks to queer neoliberal, capitalistic tendencies toward individualism and competitiveness in art and academia.[3] In one corner of the gallery stands a mixed-media sculptural work that serves as a primary focal point for audiences when they enter the space. In it, two large audio speakers support stacks of multicolored binders and books of theory

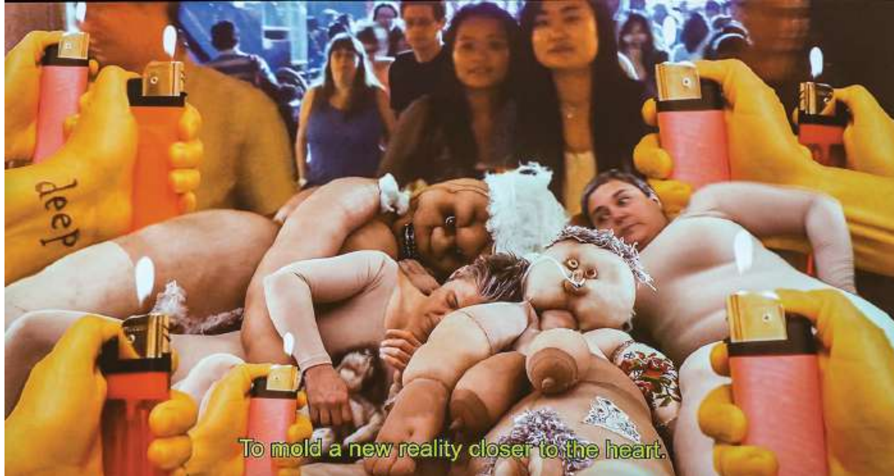
and art, including feminist theory, queer theory, and theoretical work on issues in contemporary art. The artists sourced the binders and books from around campus, collecting academic texts and catalogues on feminist and queer art from the university's library holdings. A looping soundtrack of songs by the indie band Abstract Random plays through the speakers. Emerging from the base of the sculpture are floor-length strips of red tape that draw the viewer's attention to the sculpture as a kind of source of energy for the installation. Beaming out from these theory-art-binder-speakers, the red tape lines are like vibrational sun rays—the speculative "heat source" of the work. The artists underscore the importance of feminist and queer theory and art, and the role of library research, by configuring this work as the heart of the installation—a metaphor tied as much to affect as it is to circulation.

The artists' work strives to show the inextricability of queer theory from queer practice, both at the level of the artwork and at the level of their lives as partners, collaborators, and cat parents. As Sarah E. K. Smith, who curated their exhibition in at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, writes, "These self-referential works, intimately connected to the artists' lives, forge a connection between domestic queer realities and feminist and queer discourse (both historic and contemporary)—ultimately bringing queer theory into queer practice." Smith's description of Mitchell's and Logue's works as "reflect(ing) critically on the artists' lived experience" brings to mind an autotheoretical approach to art-making; in addition to the artists critically taking up the politics, aesthetics, and theoretics of their own lives, they engage with and cite works of theory as core materials.[4] By working autotheoretically, artists like Mitchell and Logue foreground queer and feminist theory not only as a source of knowledge and consciousness-raising but also as sustenance for queer feminist living and becoming. They stage the theory text as a site where their interwoven roles in the world—artist and curator, educator and professor, community activist and organizer, lesbian and lover, cat mom and neighbor—can come together and find nourishment through critical thinking and insight, engaged conversation and the intermingling of ideas and theories, and the forging of new understandings across differences.

While the exhibition *We Can't Compete* can be read as an integrating of queer theory and queer practice, it can also be understood as a wrestling

with the very limitations and (im)possibilities of queer futurity through its forms, materials, and themes. In their video *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave,* the artists juxtapose theoretically informed reflections as text on the screen with their own performing bodies.[5] The video is an anchoring work in the larger exhibition, and it is autotheoretical in the perhaps most obvious definition of the term (the artists themselves are performing in it, beside books of theory). The artists activate performance for the camera and the medium of video art to represent the practice of reading theory as fundamentally physical, collaborative, and entangled with different kinds of intimacies.

This work evolved out of their residency at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2015, where the two artists made *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave* in front of a green screen. In the video, Mitchell and Logue appear clad in light beige full-body-suits—a shade approximating the "flesh tone" of their own white settler bodies—standing in front of a green screen with the floor lined with chroma key green material. They've created an immersive space, in which they proceed to playfully perform for the camera with different objects they created out of gluten-free papier-mâché. Dressed in the body suits, the artists interact with the text on the screen, working together and approaching that work with a sense of playful resolve. Texts from feminist and queer theory appear on the screen, blown up in Mitchell's characteristically maximalist style. Recognizable quotations from feminist theory are newly iterated to humorous effect on the screen: Simone de Beauvoir's famous saying "One is not born, but rather one becomes a woman" from her 1959 *The Second Sex* is translated on the screen as "One is not born, but rather one becomes a tabby," a fitting cat-lady reference for a video in which the artists' cats feature as incidental actors and the artists use a low-to-the-ground camera view as a nonanthropocentric, "pussy"-centred site of vision.[6]



Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue, *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Towards a Queer Horizon*, 2016, single-channel video (still). Courtesy of the artists.

Mitchell and Logue lovingly draw a portrait of queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz as an elegy to him, with the dates of his birth and death marking a project of mourning; smiling, in one scene in the video, this hand-drawn Muñoz holds up a placard that reads "NOBODY KNOWS I'M A LESBIAN," a winking disclosure that aligns this ostensibly cis-homosexual man with the lesbian artists making this work. Whether this is a comment on allyship, a posthumous granting to Muñoz of honorary lesbian status, or the revelation of a hidden "truth" about the writer remains gaily ambiguous. The homage to Muñoz riffs, perhaps unintentionally, on the play of other more bemusing gender identifications, like Sedgwick's (discussed in the last chapter), where no one knows that she is a gay man. Lines from Muñoz's best-known book *Cruising Utopia* feature alongside images from the artists' domestic lives and their art practices, joined as they are through their collaborative institution "FAG"—another rhetorical commingling and gender play, the lesbian-identified artists also going by this name: an acronym that nevertheless reads as "fag," shorthand for "faggot"—and related, though in a coincidental way, to other downtown/West End Toronto-based media arts project spaces like "Video Fag," cofounded by two gay male artist-partners a few years after Logue and Mitchell cofounded theirs.

The queer politics of this autotheoretical video continue to cohere around practices of reading theory and the relationship between these

theory texts and the artist's own queer, domestic lives. At one point in the video Logue holds a gigantic pink "highlighter": standing 152" inches high and made of gluten-free papier-mâché, it is humorously large, pink, and phallic (when I say this aloud during a presentation, the artists laugh and tell me: "Your words, not ours!"), something she must wield to achieve a purpose. Mitchell lies near Logue, reclining on her side on a giant piece of letter-sized paper, one hand holding her head up and the other hand pointing to the line that should be highlighted. Logue positions the highlighter to touch the place on the "page" to which Mitchell points, carefully balancing the unwieldy object with her body; as she moves the highlighter, the magnified "page" is highlighted in yellow, the magic of video editing rendering the act of highlighting "real" by illuminating the passage on the screen. With a sense of humor about contemporary feminist discourse and its discontents, Mitchell dons a white tee-shirt that reads "I'm With Problematic," with the screen-printed sign of a pointing hand mimicking Mitchell's own pointing hand below. Through this shared performance the artists embody the scene of reading theory as something laborious that requires support. They transform the often solo act of reading and discerning meaning from a theory book—as one might do when studying for their comprehensive exams as a graduate student, or working on the next big academic tome—into an act that is best done, lovingly, by two.

INTERGENERATIONAL QUEER FEMINIST COMMUNION

One of the ways the artists autotheoretically process queer theory's histories and futures is by reimagining relationships across different generations of queer theorizing. The artists create strategic alliances between 1970s lesbian feminism and post-2000s queer theory, enacting these alliances in performative ways. They stage intergenerational conversations in theory, bringing Monique Wittig's *The Straight Mind* (1992), a formative work of twentieth-century lesbian theory, into conversation with Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009).[7] Continuing the autotheoretical orientation of their work, the artists construct mimetic reproductions of theory texts as sculptural objects and two-dimensional drawings in the context of *I'm Not Myself At All*. In the space of the exhibition, the video is bookended by two large, mimetic reproductions of Wittig's *The Straight Mind* and Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia*, constructed from the same gluten-free papier-mâché as the highlighter.

Transforming these books into sculptural objects, Logue and Mitchell extend the practice of intertextual intimacies, identifications, and performative modes of citation that we find in written works like *The Argonauts* to a cheeky endpoint. Within Mitchell's maximalist sculpture and immersive installation work, theoretical and literary texts—cited in Mitchell's and Logue's work as key, formative references for their own lived practices as artists, feminists, and scholars—become literal, material components of the artwork that exceed their indexical function. Working with sculpture and installation, the artists gesture at honoring the contributions of second-wave, French lesbian feminism while being aware of the limitations of such epistemological modes—for example, issues of racial diversity and trans-inclusion. In doing so, they strive to understand where lesbian feminisms might fit in today's queer contexts.

The books become structuring motifs, indexical reference points, and symbolic-material art objects within the playfully intertextual fabric of the exhibition. In contemporary art, it is not uncommon to incorporate found objects into a piece, or to frame a found object as a work of art. But rather than placing the books themselves into the gallery space, Logue and Mitchell hand-make mimetic versions of the books that are joyfully

enlarged, standing with a vulnerable strength as papier-mâché objects. Traces of the artist's hand are visible through their haptic reproduction of theory books—whose influence on their work the artists foreground *as* artwork. The artists layer citations as an indexical gesture atop the art-historical traditions of conceptualism—where conceptual art itself can be described as "the aestheticization of indexes."[8] Through mimetic, handmade processes, the artists elevate feminist and queer theory books to the status of idol. The maximalist theory books function both as part of the larger installation and as their own sculptural works to be pondered.

The two large books quite literally bookend or "frame" the projected video—theory is, after all, a framework, and here it serves as a physical frame—so that the viewer's experience of the work is somehow informed by a recognition of the role these two works played in its making. The question of the fetishization of theory reemerges here. I suggest that what we find in this work is not a straightforward fetishizing of theory—although there is that too, in a knowing way (blown up in size, the texts assert their dominance with the lightness of hand-brushed paint and GF, sick-woman-aligned,[9] material)—but a foregrounding of the importance of theory to the practice of living and working queerly and feministly as queer feminist artists, for whom the labors of continually bridging theory and practice are key. It is an act of recognition, extended to comical effects through the massive scale and the winking choice of materials.

In Madelyne Beckles's and Petra Collins's 2017 performance at the MoMA, the artists read an oversized mimetic reproduction of Angela Davis's book *Women, Race, and Class* as they sit on the couch next to a similarly oversized bag of Cheetos, the book and the Cheetos serving as two different forms of collective and aestheticized consumption, maybe an oblique form of comfort "eating."[10] This is one of many threads connecting Beckles's work to Mitchell's and Logue's (another thread being that Mitchell is Beckles's aunt). In 2019, Beckles and Mitchell collaborated on a two-person show, *What Motivates Her?*; the exhibition itself became a form of juxtaposing intergenerational feminisms in contemporary art to reflect on questions related to feminisms, sexuality, race, and the body.[11] Now, instead of two books of theory—Wittig and Muñoz—we have two women, related by blood, representing two generations of feminist theorizing. The artists' hanging installation of disco balls, each held in a multicolored macrame

"pouch" handmade by Mitchell, stands as a poignant metaphor for the two artists, differently racialized and with different relationships to institutions and power by virtue of their ages and experiences, yet joined through family and a shared studio practice, holding each other in collaboration.

The creation of such strategic alliances through unexpected juxtapositions is a move found in earlier feminist autotheoretical works as well. Nancy K. Miller's *Getting Personal: Feminist Occasions and Other Autobiographical Acts* was published in 1991, the same year that feminist scholar Jane Gallop introduced the practice that she would come to call "anecdotal theory" in her controversial and autotheoretical work *Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment* (1997).[12] Gallop defines anecdotal theory as a "practice" and a "project" that draws from the literary theory methods of psychoanalysis, deconstruction, and feminism.[13] Her first use of this practice was her 1991 "A Tale of Two Jacques," an autotheoretical inquiry into the relationship between psychoanalysis, here exemplified by Jacques Lacan, and deconstruction, the project of Jacques Derrida. Gallop describes this text as both "a mid-seventies encounter" of dominant trends in theory at the time and as an elucidation of "a drama I lived through," underscoring both the performative and autotheoretical aspects of her theoretical enactments.[14] This essay was followed by "Dating Derrida in the Nineties" in 1992, in which Gallop thought through the relation between feminism and deconstruction as an autotheoretical engagement with Derrida's 1972 reading of the representation of women in Nietzsche. Gallop seeks coalitions between the "personal" of second-wave feminism and poststructuralist theory that is seen as rejecting the personal, such as Derrida's deconstruction—which was seen as fundamentally at odds with 1970s feminism by many of her contemporaries. Observing a shift in perspective on the place of the personal in theory that took place in the time between the second wave and the third, Gallop writes:

> Although deconstruction was often held to be in opposition to the sort of personal discourse favoured by seventies feminism, by the nineties it became possible to recognize a deconstructionist personal and speak a personalized deconstruction. My project of anecdotalizing theory is located very much at this intersection of the deconstructionist with the personal.[15]

Anecdotal theory is a means of reinserting the "truly literary" into theoretical writing practices, in addition to integrating the "auto" and

"theory." Gallop cites Joel Fineman on the anecdote as a literary form that is simultaneously "literary and real," or metaphorical and literal in the sense of the lived as "the moment … the here and now."[16] Her reference to the "occasional" in her description of anecdotal theory recalls Miller's use of the "occasional" to describe personal criticism or "narrative criticism" in 1991, which underscores how such a personal-critical mode of writing remains marginalized—at least temporally.

An anecdotal approach can create unexpected juxtapositions between the personal and the theoretical. For Shannon Bell, juxtaposition serves as an autotheoretical, and often performative, strategy to develop feminist thought. Describing her approach in writing *Fast Feminism,* Bell explains: "The underlying contention is that feminism needs to be infused from non-obvious philosophical locations. … The most non-obvious site is the work of Paul Virilio, the hypermasculinist philosopher and technologist of speed."[17] Positioning her own femme, sexually fluid, performing body—which engages in sexual activity with queer partners, joyfully ejaculating for the camera—next to Virilio's hyper-masc speed theory, Bell introduces a new practice she terms "fast feminism."

In Bell's view, the unexpected juxtaposition she performs in *Fast Feminism* is something that her feminist mode of theory and practice will critically, conceptually, aesthetically, and politically benefit from—something that feminist theory and experimentation in a sense require. In *I Love Dick,* Kraus infuses feminism from similarly "non-obvious philosophical locations" (see chapter 2) of male-authored philosophy, just as Piper infuses feminism from a the "non-obvious philosophical locations" of Kant's first *Critique* (see chapter 1). On the one hand, these are the contextually relevant bodies of theory that, as good contemporary artists and theorists, they are accordingly responsive to: meaning is context-bound, after all. On the other hand, what might at first seem like strange coalitions are, on reflection, understood to be meaningful allegiances and deliberate conversations that the autotheorist stages.

When in *I'm Not Myself At All* Mitchell and Logue juxtapose Muñoz and Wittig—two different thinkers from two different lineages of queer theory—as a strategy for engendering new theories and new knowledges that are attuned to a present-day queer feminist context, citation becomes a mode of experimentation where the artists take risks through juxtaposition.

Their meta-queer-feminist-theory world is less elusive or "highbrow" than it is playfully kitsch and winsomely humorous and sincere—a common tone in the artists' work. The humor of the work, for all of its theoretical in-referencing, is accessible through its moments of absurdity. Books of queer theory become birds, flying out of a bowl of hummus that the artists stir with celery sticks, like witches stirring a cauldron. Near the end of the video they lie in a cozy heap among other nylon bodies, those of the constructed "womyn" that the artists have created from textiles and other haptic materials, held in a kind of womb by the creations of Mitchell's lesbian monsters/lesbian sasquatches. They listen to a folk rendition of Rush's "Closer to the Heart" as a sea of hands holding up lighters in an act of solidarity sway from side to side. It's another weird juxtaposition, with the self-aware, sonic commingling of 1980s dude metal and 1990s acoustic lez.

On the other side of the exhibition, we find the site-specific drawing *Recommended Reading* (2010), a mimetic reproduction of the artists' personal library featuring meticulous drawings of book spines that have been photocopied into wallpaper. The work functions as queer feminist canon formation, with titles of representative texts from second-wave, third-wave, and lesbian feminisms, as well as some representation of trans and bisexual feminisms, lining the walls. The title *Recommended Reading* uses the rhetoric of a course syllabus to invite viewers to take note of the titles and read the books at their leisure: there is not a necessary rule, as "required reading" would suggest, but informal suggestions that the artists believe their audiences will benefit from having read. Mimetically handmade, the work cites theory texts—with indexical references to the title, author, and often iconic cover art—but the texts themselves are not available for reading in the gallery. Instead, the books become indexical references, affectively charged signifiers related to what will be a subsequent practice of readerly study after leaving the gallery. Viewers are visually invited to look at the source texts that have been so formative for these artists, whose works, as autotheoretical, are grounded in their lives, and to perhaps reference them as a reading list for later perusal.

Similar citational and transcriptional gestures are found in other recent art exhibitions, such as Marie-Andrée Godin's *(Im)possible Labour* at Diagonale in Montréal (2019), part of the artist's series *WWW³ (WORLD WIDE WEB / WILD WO.MEN WITCHES / WORLD WITHOUT WORK)—*

Magic, Future and Postcapitalism.[18] The installation comprises a textile work, a hand-tufted carpet that viewers are invited to sit and lie down on, and a series of texts displayed on another wall and spanning an autotheoretical narrative. Near the back of the gallery, where viewers both enter and exit, is a small, framed bibliography of recommended reading: while the texts themselves are not available, the list encourages visitors to continue their engagement with the politics and aesthetics behind Godin's exhibition through later reading and reflection.

Laura Hudspith, *TL;DR*, 2017, neon sign (installation view), Project Gallery, Toronto. Courtesy of the artist.

The motif of the reading list in recent feminist art exhibitions lives in strange tension with the tendency in larger popular culture toward hashtags like #TL;DR ("Too Long; Didn't Read"). In contrast to deeming a passage of text too long to invest time in reading, especially in an accelerated, twenty-first-century mode of living that privileges synoptic communications (such as Tweets) and skimming, contemporary feminist works that foreground the reading list or theory book can signal the importance of a slower, more committed practice of reading. It can also signal the artist's valorization of long, difficult books: this, perhaps, as part of an ethics, aesthetics, and politics of living *as* feminist, in a manner gestured to in recent books, such as Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life.*[19]

As I discussed in chapter 2, depending on the context and the artist's practice, indexical references to books of theory can be a valorization of the attentive practice of reading, but they can also be something else—more akin to virtue signaling and woke signaling, but here intelligence signaling. I think here of the Portlandia sketch in which a group of hipsters out for brunch try to outdo each other by naming the articles they've recently read in an accumulating list of publications, like the *New Yorker,* stretching the premise to extremes in the hyperbolic style of the show's satire.[20]

What do such mimetic practices of drawing out theory perform in the context of a twenty-first-century contemporary art scene? What does it mean—politically, aesthetically, symbolically, and socioculturally—to render a book of theory into a sculptural object read in relation to other objects? What drives these artists to reproduce the very texts they are reading *by hand?* And what is the significance of *theory books* in art, especially contemporary art by feminist artists and queer artists? How do artists' autotheoretical practices transform these texts and their meanings? The act of making-haptic through autobiographically inflected processes of transcription is also a making-human, rendering these objects of research and the texts we read into something palpably human and, perhaps, humane. The act of *drawing out* becomes a way of processing, of affectively relating to, enacting, embodying, purging (in a kind of catharsis), these formative discourses, texts, and quotations in ways that are resonant with feminist, queer, and BIPOC politics. Responding to *I'm Not Myself At All*, Love raises questions about Logue and Mitchell's body of work that could be asked of autotheory as contemporary feminist practice more generally, pointing ultimately to the inextricability of "what you love and what you know":

> One of the key questions that *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave* asks is how we can tell the difference between what you love and what you know. If practice presents an alternative to "traditional quantitative and qualitative scholarly research methods," it always raises the question of what kind of knowledge intimacy can yield. How do we know when we are engaged in practice-based research and when we are just living? Is extracting meaning from everyday life the richest relation we can have to it?[21]

The texts in the artwork are ones that mean something to these artists—that mean something theoretically but also affectively, socially, politically, and ethically. These are texts that the artists recommend others read, watch,

and engage with, based on how influential they were for the artists themselves; the practice of reading and citing these texts is, Mitchell and Logue emphasize, as much "practice-based research" as it is "just living."[22]

NAMING NAMES: CITATION, COMMUNITY, COMMUNION

As we have seen, citation forms an integral part of a queer feminist practice of world-making: referencing theory—for instance, reproducing a bookshelf, with the book spines visible, as a drawing in an art installation—becomes a way of building communities through discourses and ideas that are intersectional, liberatory, challenging, and affirming. These references create discursive bridges—for example, between second-wave lesbian thought and post-third-wave queer theory—through considered juxtaposition.

Others take a more cynical view of the use of citation in artistic and literary works and see the incorporation of citations into autobiographical work as a way to make the work seem more cerebral than otherwise. Writing on Moyra Davey's film *Les Goddesses* (2011) for the *New Yorker*, Jessica Weisberg writes, "By narrating her story through her favorite authors, Davey avoids the narcissistic pitfalls of autobiography."[23] This take on Davey's work from Weisberg—a critic who is perhaps less sympathetic to the autotheoretical mode than others—reminds us of the ways the charge of "narcissism" continues to be wielded against women artists who reference themselves in their work—and that the charge of "narcissistic" is, most often, mutually exclusive of being intellectual or conceptual. It is Davey's citing of others, Weisberg says, that "saves" her work from the pitfalls of narcissism and establishes it as intellectually legitimate and aesthetically interesting. By referencing others alongside herself, her work is saved from the intellectually abject realm of narcissism.

In "Feminist Approaches to Citation," media arts curator Maiko Tanaka differentiates what Mitchell and Logue, in their collaboration as FAG, do with citations from what the more typical, patriarchal, Western models of citation *do*. Tanaka cites gender studies scholar Katie King's theory of critical feminist bibliography, writing that "a critical feminist bibliographic practice asks what and for whom are we invested in when we cite, what do we consider having value, and what kinds of research can be produced?" A feminist approach to citation might extend the citation as an institutional and legalistic device (one that we use to avoid plagiarism, for example) and as a means of recognition (of the author or the theorist, whose work is

valued by the given system). The citation becomes a means of tracing both theoretical and conceptual lineages—the source of an idea—and relational/kinship and affective lineages. In Tanaka's view, FAG's practice exemplifies this kind of citation practice, wherein citation is a means of "making visible the lineages and legacies of inspiration and support that make up a feminist art community."[24] This is not unlike what Nelson does with her citational practice of naming names in the margins of the page in *The Argonauts,* where she mimetically reiterates the structure and conceit of Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse* using references to both feminist and queer theory and more standard canonical theorists, writers, and philosophers such as Wittgenstein.

Feminist theory and practice are well accustomed to the idea that a person citing an idea or text has a "personal" relationship to that text. Jeanne Randolph coined the term "fictocriticism" to describe her autofictional approach to art writing and criticism at the end of the twentieth century. Working as an artist and writer-critic in the tight-knit community of Toronto's Queen West scene in the 1980s–1990s, Randolph was looking for creative and critical ways to engender "critical distance" in her approach to writing about art. Fictocriticism emerged as her way of making-transparent her ties to the artists whose work she was responding to—friends, acquaintances, lovers, friends of lovers, neighbors. It was also a way for her to process these relationships as an integral part of the work, fictionalizing them in performative ways. By performing art writing and criticism as a "subjectivized" mode, Randolph reveals how "*all* art critical texts inherently act out a subjectivized rhetorical form"—which is to say that no art criticism can purport to be objective or disinterested (in the Kantian sense, as understood by Greenberg).[25] Rooted in parafiction, Randolph's fictocriticism is aligned with the efforts of other post-1960s feminist artists and writers who experimented with incorporating their relational lives into conceptual work in ways that are critically and artistically generative.

Citing names of friends and fellow artists and thinkers is also a way of inscribing a community and, relatedly, recording and canonizing a movement (from within it). This tendency can be found across twentieth- and twenty-first-century avant-garde and experimental scenes, from Frank O'Hara and the first-generation New York School to John Cage and Merce

Cunningham and the Fluxus scene, to Eileen Myles and the third-and-fourth-generation New York School poets. In such works as O'Hara's *Lunch Poems* (1964) or Cage's *Where Are We Eating? and What Are We Eating?* (1975), the poets or artists mention names of people they were associating with at the time—some of whom would become well-known figures in the history of twentieth-century art, poetry, dance, and performance.[26] What might seem like name-dropping to today's readers is, perhaps more accurately, the poet or artist naming shared influences in the community or scene in which they are embedded and invested. This does not mean that the names being cited do not still possess a certain kind of discursive value or social currency in a given scene—whether an experimental, avant-garde scene or an academic scene. As discussed in chapter 2, the issue of the fetishization of theory, and the formation of organizations, groups, cliques, and cult followings around certain theoretical frameworks or modes of thought—often summarized with the theorist's name (Kraus's parodic "Bataille Boys," or real-life groups such as the punning "Lacan Salon" out of Simon Fraser University in Vancouver)—remains present. The line between theory as an affirming and critical form of community building and communion and theory as uncritical fellowship or "followership" is a question that hovers over this book—and many artists who work autotheoretically fall somewhere between the two.

These practices of writing about people in one's life as part of a larger critical and theoretical practice are tied to the impulse of lateral citation as much as they are to the autotheoretical impulse of understanding one's life in relationship to others—other people, other texts. Joanna Walsh's *Break.up* (2018) brings the self-reflexivity of autotheory full circle.[27] She extends the autotheoretical form of citing-in-the-margins that we find in Nelson's *The Argonauts*, and also incorporates quotations from other contemporary autotheoretical work; Kraus's *I Love Dick* (1997) and *Aliens and Anorexia* (2000), for example, feature heavily. She integrates quotations by other philosophers, artists, and theorists from the early through late twentieth century, among them Freud, Baudelaire, Kierkegaard, Barthes, Breton, Sontag, Scarry, and Carson. Referencing many of the works of autotheory I discuss in this book, Walsh demonstrates an awareness of the autotheoretical history on which she's riffing, as well as the experimental scene she is a part of—a scene in which presses like

Semiotext(e), the book's publisher, play a central role, in another metalayer of self-reflexivity. Like O'Hara, Cage, and others before her, Walsh references the names of others working in the experimental (here, autotheoretical) ways that she is working, forging an aesthetic community of practice and form.

The flip side of citation as progressive community building and nourishment is the question of whether naming and references simply make a given movement or work more insular and inaccessible. I noted in chapter 2 that in order to get the joke of more parodic texts of autotheory texts—Musson's *ART THOUGHTZ* tutorials, or Safaei-Sooreh's theory logos—one needs a working knowledge of theory and art: one needs to know the reference to get the joke. It requires some working knowledge of theory and contemporary art to know what Kraus means (and why it's funny) when she refers to a group of young men gathering around her then husband as the "Bataille Boys," or what it means for there to be a Deleuze and Guattari logo on a Louis Vuitton–style bag. This excludes a substantial part of the population who might not have attended college or university, or who perhaps went to college but managed to avoid those "liberal arts" classes, or who are educated folks but simply don't like art or theory and don't find it interesting to visit art galleries or read philosophy.

That said, it is debatable whether theory is therefore inaccessible in a way that is problematic. Like other fields and professions, theory and art involve specialized discourses with particular languages, frameworks, and points of reference that allow a given community to communicate. Some defenses of theory turn to examples in other fields, such as medicine, to describe the drive behind specialized language—the purpose, that argument goes, is not to alienate others but to devise a way of talking about something for which existing language is not enough. It is an argument I have used when describing the usefulness of theory for practicing artists when I teach my large first-year lecture class to studio art students at a Toronto university.

Reviewing *Autotheory*, a video art screening program I curated at the Vtape artist-run center in the spring of 2018, writer Chelsea Rozansky responded to the auto-orientation linking the works: "It isn't narcissism, but a kind of badass move, to assert your presence in a discourse that marginalizes you: that talks about you, but only to itself."[28] The artists'

videos, though self-referential and often directly self-looking (many of the works engage practices of performing for the camera), might be described less as *narcissistic* and more as a process of bringing out their selves by referencing frameworks and discourses that have historically marginalized them (as Black, as queer, as two-spirit). In other words, they are autotheoretical. The works I assembled in the screening, which included Mitchell and Logue's *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave*, brought humor and levity to what can sometimes become a morose self-seriousness in theory and art discourse.

The "narcissism" of video art as a contemporary art medium describes the literal self-regarding that video art technologies made possible in the 1960s–1970s. The narcissism of video art was described in 1976 by art historian and critic Rosalind Krauss, who, following the theoretical footsteps laid out by her mentor and teacher Clement Greenberg, approached theorizing this emergent medium in terms of Greenberg's notion of "medium specificity." Krauss asked: What is the essence of the medium of video art? What is specific to this medium that makes it different from other media? What new practices does video art, as utilized by artists, make possible? The response she proffered was that the medium of video is not something aesthetic per se but is rather the psychic mechanism of narcissism itself. Video art can be defined, she emphasized, by its allowing artists to look at themselves, creating a loop of self-reflectivity that many artists, performing for the camera, have extended in conscious ways.[29]

As I assembled the screening during my research residency in Vtape's extensive archives, my interest was to consider the history of video art and narcissism through the idea of autotheory, used as a provocation through which to approach Indigenous and Canadian video art. The earliest work I included in the *Autotheory* screening was Martha Wilson's *Art Sucks* (1972), in which Wilson uses performance for the camera to literalize the consumptive rituals of conceptual art and citation practices in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[30] While the title *Art Sucks* first reads as a deprecatory, presumably winking (this is, after all, a work of *art*) statement about art, it soon becomes clear that Wilson is referring to the way conceptual art can be said to *suck* in the sense of sucking things up, sucking things into itself, like a vacuum. As a young woman artist working in a 1970s art scene, Wilson

sees the fundamental self-reflexivity of conceptual art traditions and calls it as she sees it: it *sucks*—it sucks everything back into itself, with an assimilative effect of literal incorporation (though with digestion comes the possibility for transformation).

Wilson often reads the artist's statement about a given work before moving into the "work" proper, a performance-for-video format that obfuscates the line between what constitutes the work and what constitutes the frame. The video presents the artist's statement—a framing device used in conceptual art—as part of the body of the work rather than as a frame that exists partially outside or in supplement to it (to take the Derridean sense of the *parergon*).[31] Seated at a table with a small stack of paper in front of her, Wilson addresses the camera:

> Art-making is a process which sucks identity from individuals who are close to it, but not participating themselves. The only way to recover identity is to make art yourself. In early June, 1972, I captured the soul of Richards Jarden in a color photograph. As soon as I ingest the photograph I will recover the identity that was drained from me in the past, and we will be of equal power.

She goes on to show a photograph of the American conceptual artist Richards Jarden, one of her contemporaries. After presenting it to the camera, she tears it in four pieces and takes it in her mouth, chewing and swallowing each piece. The ingesting becomes a communion-like act in which the feminist artist incorporates a formative male conceptual artist into her body as a means of recovering her own agency as a conceptualist who works in proximity to him "in the scene."

Wilson's work comments on the idea that an artist must cite another, preexisting artist in order for their own work to be valid *as* art—a practice that academics are profoundly familiar with and that defines citation in its most base sense. Indeed, it would be difficult—impossible, really—for me to get this book past the gatekeepers of peer review if I weren't grounding my own theories of autotheory in what scholars before me have said.

The artist's rendering of citation as an act of incorporation—even cannibalization (she's eating another artist, or at least a representation of an artist)—brings to mind a point literary scholar Kaye Mitchell makes when she discusses empathy and intersubjectivity in recent feminist writings. Reading Kate Zambreno's autotheoretical book *Heroines,* Mitchell describes how the socially alienated–feeling Zambreno writes the lives of

other women from history (other "madwomen" and "mad wives") around her own experience, with citation functioning, in the writer's mind, as the invocation of a community based on shared experience. But what might begin as a well-intended project of building community can become, Mitchell noted, cannibalistic when incorporated into writing and art.[32] When discussing Chris Kraus's identification with Simone Weil in *Aliens & Anorexia*—"Re-reading *Gravity and Grace* by Simone Weil, I identified with the dead philosopher completely," Kraus writes[33]—Mitchell asks: "Is this intense identification empathy, or is it appropriation?" I'm not sure I see it as either, though in works like Kraus's *I Love Dick* and Nelson's *The Argonauts* I would say there is less empathy and more appropriation, in the sense of taking the intertext into oneself, using the experiences of others as a form of self-help and self-understanding (which is then, as it turns out, shared with others through publication). In the context of an autotheoretical text, such a practice of self-help and self-understanding becomes part of a larger philosophical project, one that takes up questions about the nature of queer and cis-het relationships, or what it means to write about one's life, or to philosophize, or to write art criticism, or to be recognized as an artist, or "who gets to speak and why."

The tension between citation as a form of community-building that sustains oneself and others and citation as a way of incorporating others into oneself—a figurative cannibalization—for primarily one's own benefit (artistic practice, scholarly research, reputation, self-knowledge, the health of a relationship with a partner) haunts autotheoretical works. As the Berlin-based artist Alanna Lynch put it in a virtual studio visit with me during my ongoing curatorial experiment *Fermenting Feminism* (she was speaking about physical processes of microbial transformation and interspecies symbiosis, in relation to kombucha SCOBYs, but I think her words are relevant here): "Symbiosis is not always mutually beneficial."[34] Sometimes, someone benefits more than someone else, even if you're feeding off each other symbiotically, in relationship through shared food sources or shared intertexts—where texts are their own kind of sustenance, for research and study. Community can become cannibalism; of her literary community of "modern madwives," whom Zambreno invokes around herself to feel less lonely in her experience as an academic's wife in a new town, she writes, "I began cannibalizing these women, literally

incorporating them."[35] There is a desire for collectivity and solidarity and belonging; there is also the desire to return to how "I feel" and how "I experience this situation," which can be at odds with how *you* feel and experience the situation—something I continue to witness in even the most well-intending feminist- and social justice–oriented spaces. If my boundary is your trigger (and vice versa), then how do we organize together? Can autotheory, and the impulse toward collectivizing citation practices, provide some insight here—particularly when it comes to listening to and hearing each other both within and through our interrelated practices?

Other scholars are more optimistic about what lateral citation and other citation practices that involve this intense form of identification—what I refer to as intertextual identification—can do, politically speaking. Tanaka maintains that feminist citation practices do, in fact, have the capacity to provide "nourishment" for those who experience marginalization or displacement by the dominating systems of thought, like women of color or Indigenous people.[36] To illustrate, Tanaka provides an anecdote of her experience writing letters to her friend, a fellow woman of color, that were rife with citations of feminist literary and theory heavy-hitters like Claudia Rankine; these letters, Tanaka argues, make space for her and her friends' own experiences, anecdotes, and responses to reading to be legitimate sources to be referenced and shared. Tanaka extends Barthes's argument from "The Death of the Author," which names the reader as a coproducer of a text's meaning, to make a case that the reader's or audience's lived experience is significant to the ongoing, multidirectional process of citation practices that come to constitute meaning in culture.[37] By formatting this argument through letter-writing with a friend, Tanaka underscores feminist citation as something to be shared. Tanaka and her friend, alongside Rankine, become "legitimate references" and sources of knowledge.

Hiba Ali, *Postcolonial Language* (featuring Shreya Sethi, Diamond Stingily, Alé Alvarez, and Hiba Ali), 2013, single-channel video (still). Courtesy of the artist and Vtape.

The question of whose voice constitutes a legitimate "source" to be cited bears consideration from an intersectional feminist perspective. As discussed in the previous chapter, this question emerges in *The Argonauts* when Nelson cites her lover, the visual artist Dodge, alongside other queer and queer feminist thinkers. It also undergirds Zoe Todd's discussion of the place of Indigenous scholarship within Canadian intellectual institutions, where she cites her own reflections as an emerging Métis scholar next to Sara Ahmed's writings on feminist citation:

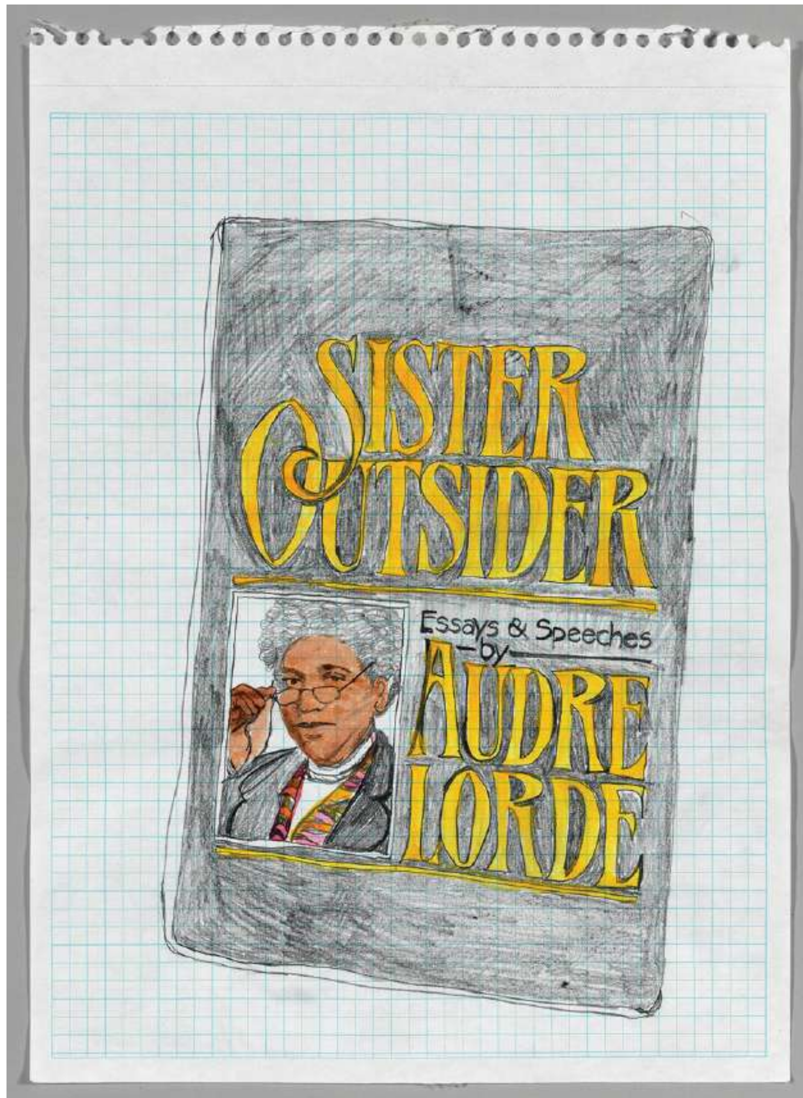
> We, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and artists alike, tend to cite non-Indigenous thinkers before Indigenous ones because the currency of words within the academy demands it. … Thinking *with* Ahmed's work, I argue that in dealing with Indigenous ontologies, citation is also a *resuscitation* of specific ways of framing legal orders and cosmologies themselves. As an Indigenous feminist, I seek through my work to revive and enliven the thinkers and worlds that honour and acknowledge the lives, laws and language of Indigenous peoples as distinct and concrete intellectual traditions in Canada.

Todd highlights the issue of valuation, referring to "the currency" of citations within academic institutions. Like Sedgwick's spatial positioning of "beside," or more recent discussions of lateral citations, Todd places herself as "thinking *with* Ahmed's work." She herself becomes an important lateral citation, referencing Ahmed's work while emphasizing her own long-standing commitment as an Indigenous feminist to enlivening sources and texts—"lives, laws, and language"—that the colonizing culture has

sought to kill.[38] For Indigenous feminism, then, a feminist approach to citation is one grounded as much in “resuscitation” as in kinship, sustenance, and support for individuals and communities who have been, and continue to be, marginalized and oppressed by the dominant cultures.

REFERENTIAL ACTIVISM

While citation is an important part of autotheoretical practices, the creation of one's own theories from the substance and contexts of one's life is often just as important—this is part of what constitutes the shuttling of "autotheory" as a mode. Writing in their contribution to the introduction to the third edition of *Borderlands/La Frontera,* composed in "ten voices," T. Jackie Cuevas writes: "Anzaldúa's sense of activist-scholarship reminds the queer-minded, left-of-center that we must remember to hope—and to act—as we theorize. And that we must continue to make our own theories, not just believe the insidious lies that we are taught about ourselves and each other." Incorporating their own investments in Anzaldúa's work, Cuevas concludes: "I'm grateful to la Gloria as I navigate living Chicana, living queer, living poet, living storyteller, living teacher, living activist-scholar, living borderlands every day."[39]



Cauleen Smith, *Human_3.0 Reading List (Audre Lorde)*, 2015, drawing. Courtesy of the artist.

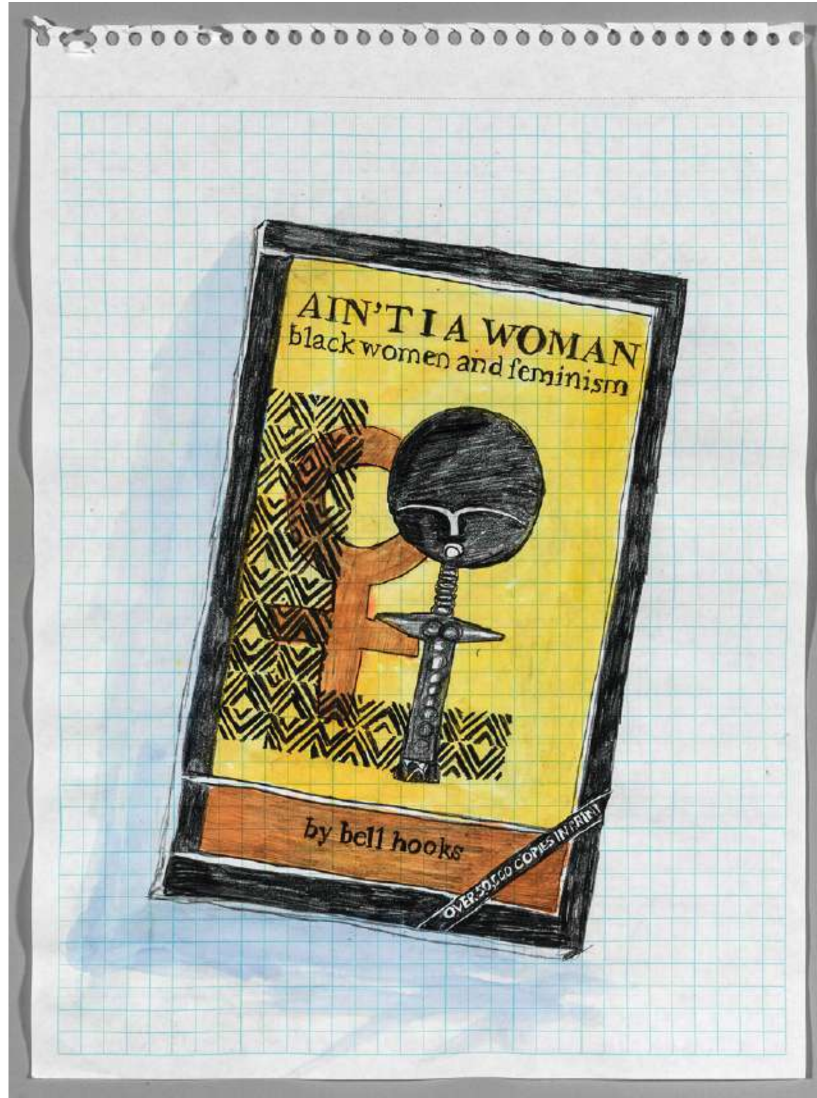
On December 30, 2015, Bhanu Kapil tweeted "'Citation is feminist memory.'—Sara Ahmed."[40] Citing a fellow feminist writer and woman of color in a tweet about feminist citation, Kapil demonstrates how practices of citing theory have extended to online social media platforms as a mode of feminist networking and disseminating ideas. By stating that "citation is feminist memory," Ahmed (and, iteratively, Kapil) suggests that there is a shared archive, a kind of textual collective unconscious for feminists that takes shape as citation. Ahmed configures the citation as integral to the preservation of feminist history (or "herstory")—a diaphanous history

dependent on these decentralized, collective, ongoing processes of citing utterances, ideas, and texts. Reviewing Jill Soloway's on-screen Amazon Video adaptation of *I Love Dick*, McKenzie Wark writes, "The no-future sensibility of punk is now the general condition, which is also one of no-past."[41] The works of Nelson and Mitchell and Logue resist both tendencies: turning to the past through citation becomes a means of theorizing and envisioning a future for queer feminists.

Especially within BIPOC, feminist, and queer scenes, there can be a more explicitly politicized project of community building, cohesion, and recognition involved in the making-visible of citations in artwork, as an antidote to histories of oppression. An impulse toward ideas of art and writing as "world-making" projects is found in such spaces, where "world-making" means, most simply, imagining new, more progressive, intersectional, and just worlds. World-making projects shuttle between the speculative and the literal, which we find in works like FAG—Logue's and Mitchell's collaborations in curating and programming, and in art-making—and other recent feminist-focused contemporary art projects, like the Black Wimmin Artist committee and The Feast, whose 2019 gathering at the Art Gallery of Ontario brought one hundred Black women artists together to share a meal in the central space of the art museum.

In a project I am involved with for 2021, envisioned and directed by curator Jaclyn Quaresma at the Durham Art Gallery, I and three other artist-curators—Whitney French, Rebeka Tabobondung, and Myung-Sun Kim—were invited to "speculate the potential outcomes of feminist science-fiction author Octavia E. Butler's unfinished *Parable* series" in the context of the regional gallery space, as part of a larger project of collaboration and imaginings around Butler's *Parable* books. Quaresma invited us to organize exhibitions that would extend the possibilities of Octavia Butler's *Parable* series through experimental exhibition formats including site-specific interventions, like a community garden, and performative gatherings, cohering around four themes: trickster, teacher, chaos, and clay. Curators and artists, reading and discussing Butler's books together over the period of two years, will hone Butler's deep and generative, yet unfinished work in a contemporary context, processing through practice the possible lessons that Butler rendered allegorically through the science fiction genre. As I research Butler, prompted by my conversations with Quaresma, I'm moved

to find her handwritten notes in her drafts—statements like "More Hispanics" marked in the margins, as notes to guide the writer as she represents the religion of Earthseed and the context from which it emerges. The margins are emphatically punctuated with exclamations. Even in her drafts, the importance of intersectional feminist world-making to her sci-fi is visible in Butler's work.



Cauleen Smith, *Human_3.0 Reading List (bell hooks),* 2015, drawing. Courtesy of the artist.

Black feminist artist and filmmaker Cauleen Smith foregrounds citationality as a collective practice of community building. In *Human_3.0 Reading List* (2015), Smith draws out the covers of theory books using dark

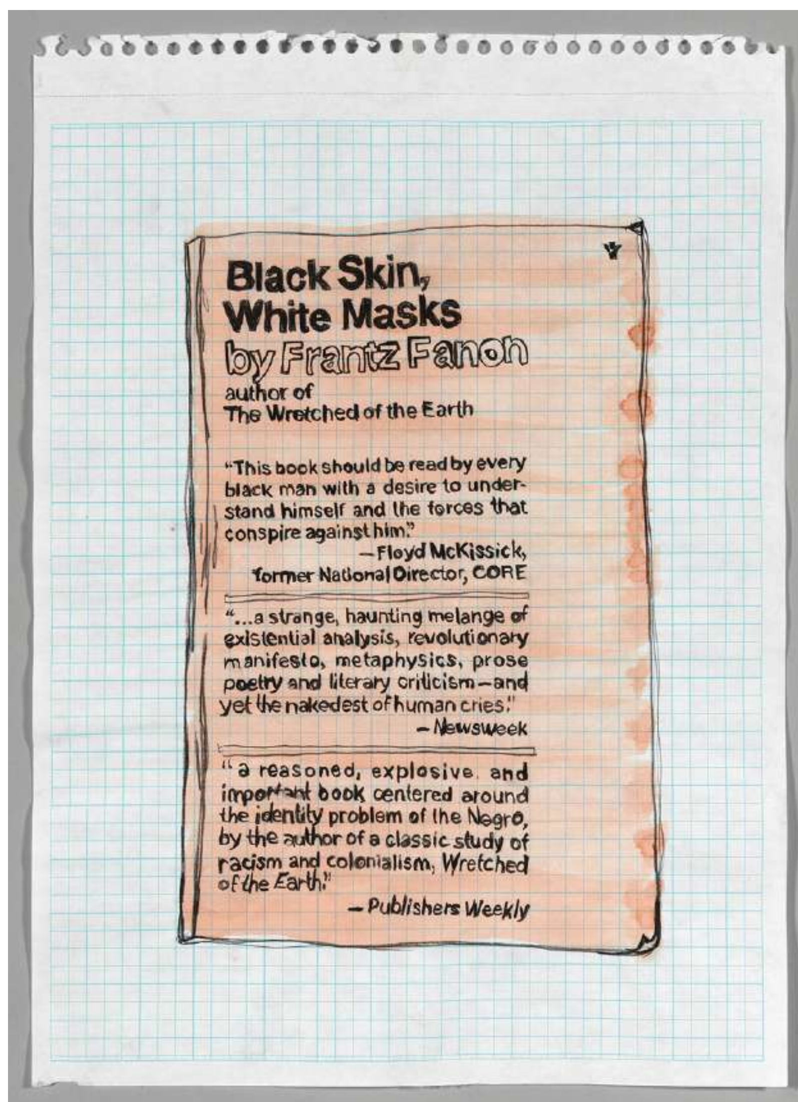
graphite and acrylic on graph paper. The graph paper ties the work to contexts of school and learning, in contrast to a more “elevated,” high-art space. In her artist’s statement on the work, Smith explains that Black people living in Black Lives Matter–era America are “engaged in combat without the proper armor”; her work provides one response to this structurally constituted “lack” (insofar as, through generations of structural racism, Black people in America have been denied access to accumulating the kinds of generational capital—inherited wealth in the form of money, and other forms of value and protection—that many white Americans, especially those with class privilege and old money, have, which is one of many convincing arguments for reparations). Smith advocates for study —“deep and active study”—and critical conversation as activistic armor in place of weapons and alongside defense gear:

> And so I declare once more: Black people are engaged in combat without the proper armor. In addition to gas masks and kevlar jackets, and smart phone video, we require inoculations that repel the seductions of corporate servitude. I offer this as an action:
>
> STUDY. Deep and active study.
>
> Supplemented with CONVERSATION engaged in with the intention of producing RESISTANCE.[42]

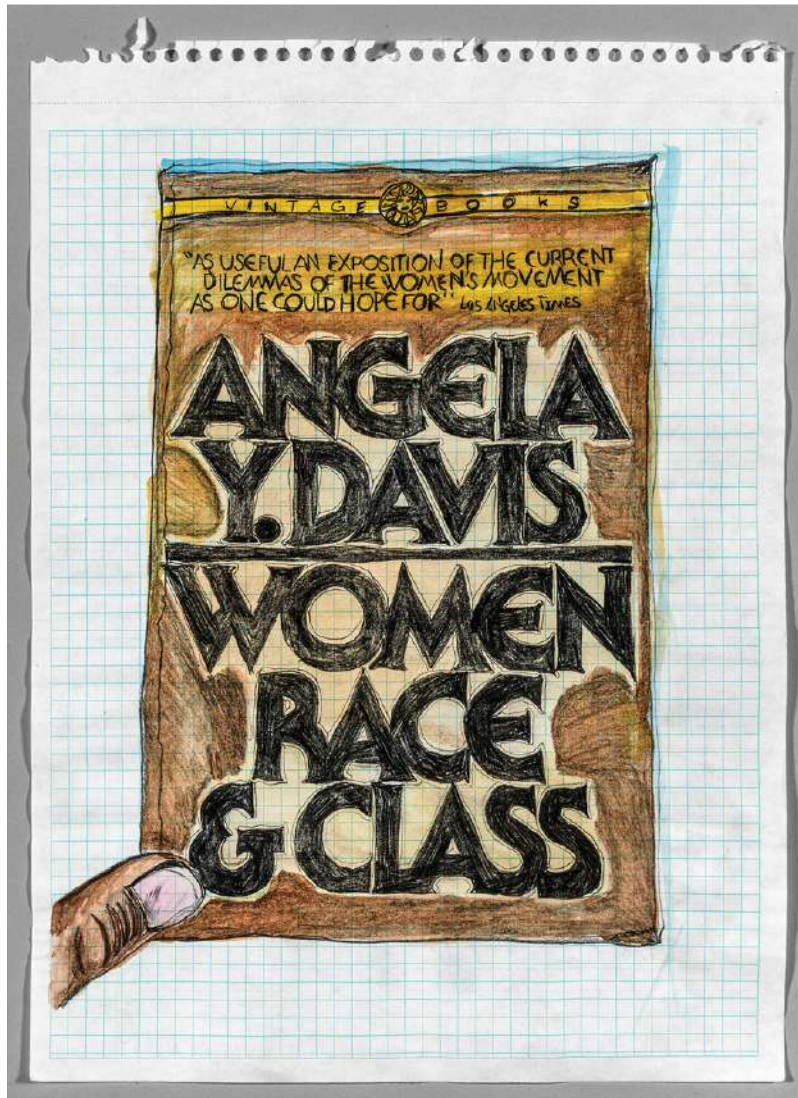
Available in digital versions online, Smith’s drawings are framed by her “Human_3.0 Reading List—The Manifesto,” which articulates the impulse behind the project. She emphasizes the importance of reading books of theory and literature as consciousness-raising and mobilization for Black folks in America, in the era of the Black Lives Matter movement: “The rhetoric of this movement exists within a lineage of activism which has been informed by the lucid contributions of artists like James Baldwin and Nina Simone, to name just a couple.” Smith emphasizes that this list is not intended to “make activists” but to “cultivate black consciousness which then inevitably defines and shapes and guides the actions and decisions we make as we shape and build our world”: this distinction underlines how autotheoretical practice is grounded in the politics of everyday life.[43] Smith’s reading list emerges from her life—she includes those books that have provided her with strength—and the collective “auto” of Black Americans that might find similar strength in these readings.

In most of the works, Smith draws the full covers of the books, complete with the cover art, the book’s title, the author, and other

paratextual information. Smith's illustrated reading list features books by writers like Toni Morrison, Darko Suvin, Sylvia Wynter, Cedric J. Robinson, Moraga and Anzaldúa, Lorde, Gerda Lerner, Haraway, hooks, Fanon, Paula Giddings, Elizabeth Alexander, Lawrence W. Levine, Hafiz, Du Bois, Samuel R. Delaney, Angela Y. Davis, Baldwin, Moten, Butler, and Muñoz—the last linking her work to Mitchell's and Logue's, as the artists grapple with shared ideas around queer feminist world-making in the twenty-first century.



Cauleen Smith, *Human_3.0 Reading List (Frantz Fanon)*, 2015, drawing. Courtesy of the artist.



Cauleen Smith, *Human_3.0 Reading List (Angela Y Davis),* 2015, drawing. Courtesy of the artist.

Smith says her “abridged list” is a starting point—what she calls “an offering of study”—for later contributions and sharing. She encourages those who come across her work, whether online or as postcards distributed at cafés or book co-ops in Chicago, to read the books and draw the covers of other books they want to add to the rolling collection. The reading list did not originate with Smith: it was built from lists shared with the artist during her years of study with scholars and activists like Angela Y. Davis; now, she shares the list with others to provide access to theory outside universities. “Our Universities cannot exist without enslaving students

through debt," Smith writes, citing Moten and Harney's *The Undercommons*. To quote Smith:

> These 14 books[44] are just the start, all that I had time to draw. These are some of the books that literally changed my life, saved my life and sustain my life, but also, (fair warning) make it difficult for me to go along, get along, look the other way, and gets mines. These behaviors neatly summarize the Neoliberal Code of Conduct, to which I say: Screw you. I share these books in the hopes that through study and conversation exchange occurs and the inoculation sticks. Resistance is not futile. RESISTANCE IS ALL WE HAVE.[45]

Smith not only draws out the books by hand; in some of the images, she brings the hand directly into the image, drawing a hand—often a Black hand—holding the book of note. In each case, the trace of the artist's hand is there through the haptic materiality of graphite on paper. As a form of haptic reproduction, copying something by drawing it by hand has a different kind of affective charge than, say, reproducing it with an iPhone photograph. Smith's drawing of the covers of theory books—like Logue's and Mitchell's—is performative and iterative: rather than the uncanny effect produced by close resemblance to the original, these drawings are clear about their differences from the "actual" text. Drawing these book covers takes time, and Smith mentions the logistical parameters of life under neoliberalism when she explains that the books on the list are only those that she had the "time" to draw. Tactile and ritualistic, appearing friendly like a comic or a children's book, the practice of mimetically drawing out theory books makes them—academic as they might be—more approachable for more people.

The act of metaphorically arming oneself with books of theory also emerges in the work of Black artist Carolyn Lazard, there in relation to the phenomenology of chronic illness and hospitalization. In Lazard's *In Sickness and Study* (2015–2016), the artist arms herself with books of theory and literature each time she receives blood transfusions for an autoimmune disorder. Lazard repeats the performance series over the course of two years, documenting it with a selfie for each book that she takes with her iPhone camera. The composition of each digital photograph is similar, focusing on Lazard's arm, bandaged and connected to an IV drip. Her arm is extended and holding a single book out with the cover facing the camera: such books as Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider,* Ann Cvetkovich's *An Archive of Feelings,* McKenzie Wark's *Molecular Red*, Fred Moten and Stefano

Harney's *The Undercommons*, Alison Kafer's *Feminist, Queer, Crip,* and Octavia E. Butler's *Dawn*. The act of posing with books of feminist and queer theory is an autotheoretical gesture found on social media platforms such as Instagram, which is where Lazard first shared this work as a web-based performance of sorts. Here, the self-imaging of Adrian Piper's *Food for the Spirit* (1971), discussed in chapter 1, returns in a different way.

Carolyn Lazard, *In Sickness and Study (An Archive of Feelings),* 2015–present, digital photograph posted to Instagram. Courtesy of the artist and Essex Street Gallery.

The given canon—if we are to use this concept, fraught as it is—from which an artist, writer, or critic draws when sourcing citations and points of

reference in their autotheoretical work will shift according to context, be it cultural, geographic, historic, or social. This becomes clear, for example, when looking to autotheoretical works by Indigenous and Black writers and artists. The books Lazard chooses to bring with her to her hospital visits are often feminist or feminist-adjacent theory, as well as books that engage issues around biopolitics and the medicalization of bodies. These autotheoretical practices are themselves often practices of canon making, based on which texts they select and represent through photography, drawing, and performance. In Lazard's case, not all the books are "theory" in the strict sense; there is also literature, including fiction, that operates in proximity to theory—Octavia E. Butler's science fiction work *Dawn,* for example, which is wrapped up in critical projects of social justice, political imagining, and new world-making.

Lazard's ongoing project of performance for the camera brings into practice ideas that she has explored in her other writings, like "How To Be A Person In the Age of Autoimmunity," which recounts the story of her diagnosis with Crohn's disease.[46] This autotheoretical text, written as a first-person narrative grounded in the lived experience of chronic illness, is framed with an epigraph from an 1827 letter written by Goethe to Hegel: "I'm afraid that then dialectics in its total abstrusity is only good for totally sick, ill, and mad people." Lazard's text, written in 2013, would go on to be cited in subsequent autotheoretical writings on illness and pain, including artist, writer, and self-described psychonaut Johanna Hedva's *Sick Woman Theory.*[47]

Carolyn Lazard, *In Sickness and Study (Sister Outsider)*, 2015–present, digital photograph posted to Instagram. Courtesy of the artist and Essex Street Gallery.

COMMUNING WITH THEORISTS

In autotheoretical practices, citations can take the form of a kind of speculative, even spiritual, communion with theorists and philosophers. In Larry Achiampong and David Blandy's *Finding Fanon Trilogy* (2015–2017), the artists create a three-part cinematic series that autotheoretically takes up the philosophy of Frantz Fanon in a twenty-first-century, globalized context, through the premise of the artists collectively seeking out Fanon's lost plays. The men became close friends during their studies at the Slade School of Fine Art; in their collaborations, they think through their respective positionalities in the wake of Thatcher-era England and the ideas of so-called postcolonialism that were circulating at that time.[48] They co-authored the script of *Finding Fanon*, a shared narrative where it is not clear who wrote what, blurring the racial divide at the level of authorship. The script takes the form of an overlaid audio narration, giving an autotheoretical framework to the actions performed on-screen. The film's conceit of a "quest for Fanon" drives the narrative forward while reenergizing Fanonian philosophy from at least two interdialogic, contemporary points of view.

Their script integrates Fanonian thought, found texts, and personal statements, the two men contemplating Fanon's work decades after its writing. Their writings take up key ideas in Fanonian philosophy—the psychopathology of colonialization, ideas of radical anticolonial humanism, and the impacts of decolonization—from their perspectives as artists with different racial backgrounds and experiences in Britain. In the third film of the trilogy, Achiampong and Blandy are performative stand-ins for Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre, and the film is inspired by Fanon and Sartre's textual conversations and collaborations (Sartre wrote the preface to Fanon's 1961 work *Les Damnés de la Terre,* which can be read as a gesture of allyship to Fanon's psychoanalytic critique of colonialism at the height of decolonizing movements in Africa[49]):

> It was only in their search for the lost plays of Frantz Fanon, a man who predicted much of what we will show you … that everything became clear. It's an unfinished conversation. It's never-ending. It has to be.[50]

In the films, Achiampong's Blackness and Blandy's whiteness visually play off each other; many of the actions show the men "sharing space," underscoring the omnipresent theme of solidarity across difference. There is a quiet sense of calm compassion, as the men move through an unnamed, undated future that is ambiguously utopian or dystopian—but certainly postapocalyptic. By focusing in on the material, resource-driven aspects of colonialism and its impacts on the land in *Finding Fanon Part One*, the artists gesture to the fact that the colonialist drive is still very much present —in the mining of minerals for iPhones, for example. Yet over the course of the three films there is a hopeful mood that vibrates between sentimental and stoic, heightened by a soaring cinematic score. In *Finding Fanon Part Three,* themes of collective world-making and futurity come to a head as the artists bring their children in as "nonactor" actors alongside them: Achiampong's two Black children, and Blandy's two white children, walking with the artists together through an undetermined land. As they seek him out, the philosopher Fanon (present through the legacy of his written words) becomes their guide.

In works like Smith's *Human_3.0 Reading List* and Achiampong and Blandy's *Finding Fanon Trilogy*, the artists show their beliefs in the possibility of a better future by visually representing and allegorizing books and theorists that energize and nourish their cause. Refusing the academic and art world trends of Afro-pessimism or Afro-futurism, Smith employs autotheory to affirm the value of reading theory as something with the capacity to change communities for the better. She grounds these affirmations in her own lived experience: "This reading list is for the Doers-Who-Think; not the academics who think there's no point. This shit is for the afro-nihilist. Because the only reason to destroy a world is if we share the fundamental belief that a better world is possible."[51] Works by Lazard, Smith, Mitchell and Logue, and Achiampong and Blandy embody the possibility of social and political change and personal empowerment and care through consciousness-raising and envisioning of more inclusive and livable futures for more people, invoking BIPOC, queer, and feminist theorists as allies.

Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, *Finding Fanon Part Three,* 2017, film (still), image by Claire Barrett. Courtesy of the artists.

The autotheoretical project, alongside the citational practices discussed throughout this book, involves reflecting on history, ancestry, land and place, embodied existence in a given place at a given time, the philosophers and theorists before us who have passed, whose texts and ideas and words live on in and through us: how might we commune, as it were, with these ancestors? In *Finding Fanon Part Two,* the artists ask, “Do you really think Fanon is here? Is there some remnant of his plays embedded on the top of that mountain? Above that rendered sky?”[52] As they move through the landscapes in their video, bringing their children in with them, the answer seems to be—somewhere in their hearts and minds—that yes, in some sense he is here.

YOUR AUTO IS OVER (IF YOU WANT IT): AUTOTHEORY AND IDENTITY DEATH

What can I do about all the years I defined myself as a feminist? I have no other alternative but to revise my classics, to subject those theories to the shock that was provoked in me by the practice of taking testosterone. To accept the fact that the change happening in me is the metamorphosis of an era.
—Paul B. Preciado, *Testo Junkie*

One of the flip side of feminist world-making projects is the revelation that, with true change comes certain forms of loss. In the thick heat of the Toronto summer in 2014, I and my two friends and collaborators, Amber Christensen and Daniella Sanader, biked over to Logue and Mitchell's house to interview them. The topic was the artists' vision for a Feminist Art Fair International (FAFI), which would require the creation of an intersectional feminist economy not predicated on capitalistic, patriarchal, neoliberal modes of circulation and value.

FAFI was a speculative idea, or ideal, that would require a complete reimagining of what an art economy could mean. During our conversation, Mitchell and Logue conceded their exhaustion: their collaborative work, using their own money to organize and pay artists, uses all kinds of energy, and they were committed to the work of paying artists—with no exceptions—and making art as lesbian feminists. And yet they are not unaware of their privileged positions—as white, settler feminists, as a professor (in Mitchell's case), and as home-owners. "We use our privilege," they said, as they reflected on the choices they have made throughout their life to put the intersectional feminist theory they held in such high regard into *practice*.[53] In the time since, though, the artists have had to grapple with some difficult truths in relation to their own subject positions in their larger, present-day queer communities: the "lesbian," it seems, is over.

What would it mean for these lesbian artists to no longer have their identity of "lesbian" to hold on to—if their core identification, as they have known it throughout their lives, is at risk of extinction? One of the crisis points in Mitchell and Logue's work with "lesbian" came in the wake of the first iteration of their *Killjoy's Kastle,* staged in Toronto in the fall of 2013. The work was vehemently critiqued by some as trans-exclusionary, with many of the work's "jokes" (related to castration, for example) received as violent and triggering. The artists took these critiques seriously, and while

they might not have themselves agreed—one of the hand-painted signs in the entrance way warns, in the characteristically winking, kitsch-witch discourse: "No satanic transphobic humans allowed!," and trans-identified folks were an integral part of the project—they reworked the work and continued to engage in difficult conversations with the different communities they brought the work to, including queer communities in Los Angeles and Philadelphia, where the project was positively received.[54] But the initial opposition to their piece signaled something larger, which remained with the artists and which they took seriously: a turn by a growing number of queers against classic forms of queer identification.

Although lesbianism might not be over, the identity of "lesbian" seems, for some, to belong to another era. Unlike other reclaimed words, such as the Dan Savage–championed "fag/faggot" and terms like "trans," "nonbinary," and "genderqueer," the word "lesbian" is seen in some queer communities as overinvested in a passé view of womanhood and gender difference. It is a problem that the term "bisexual" (which I remain invested in, in terms of my own identification) has come up against too—with its etymological ties to the gender "bi-nary." Terms that are seemingly more open when it comes to the spectrums of identities and sexualities, such as "pansexual" and "queer," have emerged as a counter to the ostensibly 1970s-feeling "lesbian" and the 1990s-feeling "bisexual," both of which have been critiqued for their ostensible exclusion and exclusivity—although such critiques are, in my view, both ahistorical and overly simplistic, often ignoring the actual perspectives of those who identify with those terms for a superficial understanding of what those terms signify.

Mitchell and Logue, as middle-aged lesbian artists, are not unaware of this, and it seems they have been processing it in subtle and conceptual ways through their work over the past decade. Much of their work of processing queer theory's histories and futures includes their practice of theorizing—from their lived, embodied experiences—the ontology of lesbianism and the figure of the lesbian. Even the artists' preservation of historical feminist texts, such as the lesbian writer and theorist Monique Wittig's *The Straight Mind,* in their video art and installation works is not without its ambivalence; Heather Love writes of how Logue and Mitchell stage the second wave as a kind of "historical hangover," even as the artists include many second-wave works in *Recommended Reading.*[55] Logue and

Mitchell are self-aware about the ways certain theories and modes of theory—such as "second-wave lesbian theory"—are differentially coded and valued. Their strategy, to juxtapose such theory with more recent—and perhaps more relevant (the equivalence between more recent and more relevant is a question here, as is the question of the historicity of identities and terms)—theory, seems to have produced the revelation that they must mourn their own lesbian identities.

Mitchell and Logue's work has long been invested in ideas of lesbianism and lesbian-identified communities, from Mitchell's now canonical (in queer feminist scenes) "Deep Lez" to their collaborative *Killjoy's Kastle: A Lesbian Feminist Haunted House.* Their autotheoretical work continues to mobilize lesbian-feminist critique in incisive and playful ways in contemporary art. Their recent work on lesbian death, in the sense of the proverbial death of "the lesbian" (not to be confused with the pop cultural trope/joke of "lesbian bed death") extends their autotheory in a melancholic direction as they investigate the question of whether the discursive identity and term of "lesbian" is now *passé* in the contemporary queer communities in which they live and love. Logue's artwork has long taken up death, and their recent project with Mitchell and artist-scholar friends and peers Eliza Chandler, Kim Collins, and Esther Ignagni on *Deathnastics: Feminist Crip World Making,* dives into questions of disability, accessibility, and dying with dignity through a transinstitutional, crip-led, academic-artistic collaboration.

The "death" of one's identity—an identity one has long defined oneself as, and has reperformed day after day, in the Butlerian sense of an identity "instituted through a stylized repetition of acts"[56]—raises interesting questions around autotheoretical practice and the instability of the "auto." It must be said that, very often, the drive behind such identity-death (or identity killing) is venerable: an identity might be exclusionary, for example, or in other cases outright hateful and violent. Many of us would like to see the final death of "white supremacist" or "Nazi," for example, as a self-defined identity, though with the rise of neo-Nazism and the surging of white supremacy around the world this seems unlikely. The case of the "lesbian," though, is more nuanced. Trans-exclusionary lesbians, rare though they might be today, have seriously tainted the lesbian brand, and those identifying specifically as "lesbian" are sometimes seen as

exclusionary, even as there is a large, transnational community of young, intersectional, trans-inclusive, lesbian-identified folks emerging as part of a younger queer generation.

The problems of ahistoricity and preservations of still valuable aspects of queer history factor in here, as does the question of how self-defining identity circulates, takes on value and cachet, and depreciates in value over time. Some terms—especially those associated with masc-ness (that is, terms used to describe male homosexuality)—seem more resilient, and this is surely a feminist problem. Might the words that those in the millennial generation are readily claiming, for example nonbinary, pan, and gender fluid, be "dead" or problematic in a few decades (perhaps for nonbinary's invocation of "the binary" through a negation of it that nonetheless points to and relies on binaryness)? And what will they/we use then? I ask this even as I identify somewhere along the gender spectrum—queer/bisexual nonbinary femme (she/her and they/them pronouns)—and nevertheless am somber in my respect for my lesbian-identified friends. While this is more a thought experiment than anything else, I raise it here to get at the problem of discursively killing off identity categories, and the ways autotheory can take up these problems through lived experience, considered deliberation, and care. It is a consequential question for histories and theories of feminisms and LGBTQQIA2S+ communities.

Still, the question remains: is there is a time-based nature to certain identities, of which "lesbian" is but one example? The politics and aesthetics of autotheory in contemporary art are further complicated when a self-identified identity (in the sense of a chosen term by which one identifies and finds oneself in community) might not be permissible or permanent and, in fact, might be subject to changing fads and discursive death. What does it mean for a given identity to *die?* What happens to the person whose identity has "died"? Where does that leave the one for whom that identity was integral to their sense of self, and their sense of belonging?

Mitchell and Logue's work over the past five years is both a kind of experimental self-documenting of their practices *as* lesbian artists up to this point—and their communities, their networks, their performances, their potlucks (that supposed staple of lesbian culture, referenced by the queer feminist art journal *nomorepotlucks*)—and a heartfelt questioning as to what comes next. In their recent presentation "Lesbian Death," offered as

part of Lisa Steele's *Female Voices* program at MOCA (2019), Mitchell and Logue played a documentation video from *Killjoy's Kastle*.[57] The installation and the many diverse, queer humans who made it happen seemed so different from the trans-exclusionary narrative I had heard about the work, and as I watched the video to the end, the weight of the work—its politics and reception, its difficulties and small successes, its pleasure and its pain—sank into my body.

The question of lesbian history, futurity, and death is thoughtfully taken up in more detail in both recent works, such as Cait McKinney and Mitchell's *Inside Killjoy's Kastle: Dykey Ghosts, Feminist Monsters, and Other Lesbian Hauntings* (2019), and past works, such as *The Aerial Letter* by Nicole Brossard (1985).[58] Muñoz's declaration that "queerness is not yet here" is a refrain throughout Mitchell and Logue's *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave*, and while death does not emerge explicitly in the work, there is an unavoidable sense that something meaningful is about to end. Like Preciado reflecting, in the epigraph above, on his shift from self-defining as "feminist" for many years to self-defining as something yet-to-be-determined, Logue and Mitchell ask: What comes next? In *I'm Not Myself At All,* they concede that "we may never touch queerness," echoing Muñoz's sentiment cited earlier in the video.[59] That queerness—specifically, queer feminism—is a horizon these artists will continue to crawl toward, next to their multispecies companions, without the expectation that it can be attained in their lifetime, is implied through these works.

What lesbian death reminds me of, in the context of a reflection on the autotheoretical impulse in contemporary practices, is the fragility of the *autos* as the ground for our sense of knowledge and understanding, our sense of *self.* As feminist philosophers and activists before us have made the case, identity is important: our practices of making-knowledge and of speculating and coming-up-with-theories and enacting politics is grounded, fervently, in a subjective self. But what happens when that self no longer exists—or at least not as one has been accustomed to name it? What happens when the integrity of that *self*—particularly or, *especially*, as constituted in discourse (here, the "lesbian" as a particular discursive category, temporally marked and different from "queer woman")—is challenged? What if, as Mitchell and Logue seem fatalistically aware, the challenging of that sense of *self*—that very category of one's *autos,* or of

one's *autotheory*—is a necessary part of the politics of intersectional feminisms to which they are committed? What happens then? Is there an endpoint to autotheory? A half-life?

There will come a day when all of our *autos*, no matter how discursively-materially resilient, will come to an end. The question of both literal death and discursive death, both material in their own ways, is a question of particular importance to ideas of autotheory and the autotheoretical turn in contemporary cultural production. Are there possibilities for discursive change alongside social change, particularly when it comes to artistic and critical practices oriented toward the politics of queerness and sexual diversity? With its attunement to the nuances of identity and identification, belonging and becoming, autotheory can make space for practices that work through the fluidity of identity in all its beginnings and endings and middles, and make space for the mourning of those identities that cease to discursively and maybe even materially exist, carried off by political and aesthetic and social and biological changes, doing so with due diligence and respect. Autotheoretical practices of citation become both drivers of that change and a documenting of it, preserving an image of selves in flux.

NOTES

1. In an interview in 2015, Mitchell stated: "When we opened FAG five years ago, we said that it was only going to be a five-year project. We took the model from LTTR, a collective of friends and artists from New York, who collapsed their project after five years because they didn't want to become institutionalized." Amber Christensen, Lauren Fournier, and Daniella Sanader, "A Speculative Manifesto for the Feminist Art Fair International: An Interview with Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue of the Feminist Art Gallery," in *Desire Change: Contemporary Feminist Art in Canada,* ed. Heather Davis (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 257–270.
2. Lauren Berlant and Kathleen Stewart, *The Hundreds* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019); Hiromi Goto and David Bateman, *Wait until Late Afternoon* (Calgary: Frontenac House, 2009).
3. Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue, *We Can't Compete,* exhibition, curated by Josephine Mills, University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, Lethbridge, AB, January 23–March 6, 2014.
4. Sarah E. K. Smith, "Bringing Queer Theory into Queer Practice," in *Deirdre Logue & Allyson Mitchell: I'm Not Myself At All,* ed. Meg Taylor (Kingston, ON: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 2015), 30.
5. Allyson Mithcell and Deirdre Logue, *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave*: *Crawling towards a Queer Horizon*, (2016), video, 24:32 min., Vtape, http://www.vtape.org/video?vi=8423.
6. Heather Love theorizes Mitchell and Logue's use of a low-to-the-ground, view-from-the-floor perspective in their video, with its multispecies, cat-ally valences (as the artists crawl with the camera, they encounter their cats, on the same "level" as they) as being tied to what Jack Halberstam calls low theory: "The queer future as Logue and Mitchell picture it is low: low to the ground, low key, low culture, low down. You can't fly into this queer future: you have to crawl." "Low," in Tayor, ed., *Deirdre Logue & Allyson Mitchell: I'm Not Myself At All*, 41.
7. Monique Wittig, *The Straight Mind and Other Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992); José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).
8. R. M. Vaughan, "Nova Scotia College of Art and Design Was the Darling of the '70s Art World—We Think," *CBC Arts,* January 14, 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/arts/nova-scotia-college-of-art-and-design-was-the-darling-of-the-70s-art-world-we-think-1.3403927.
9. GF being short for gluten-free. I say "sick-woman-aligned" here, as there is a relationship between gluten intolerance and present-day autoimmune disorders.
10. Madelyne Beckles and Petra Collins, *In Search of Us* [performance], MoMA, New York, March 18, 2017.
11. Allyson Mitchell and Maedlyne Beckles, *What Motivates Her?,* exhibition, Thames Art Gallery, Chatham, ON, January 18–March 10, 2019.
12. Nancy K. Miller, *Getting Personal: Feminist Occasions and Other Autobiographical Acts* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Jane Gallop, *Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).
13. Jane Gallop, *Anecdotal Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 2.
14. Gallop, *Anecdotal Theory*, 11.
15. Gallop, *Anecdotal Theory*, 5.
16. Gallop, *Anecdotal Theory*, 2–5.

17. Shannon Bell, *Fast Feminism: Speed Philosophy, Pornography, and Politics* (New York: Autonomedia, 2010), 12.
18. Marie-Andrée Godin, *(Im)possible Labour,* exhibition, Diagonale Centre des arts et des fibres du Québec, Montreal, QB, April 11–June 8, 2019.
19. Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017).
20. Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein, "Did You Read It?," *Portlandia,* IFC, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JLWQEuz2gA.
21. Love, "Low," 43–44
22. Love, "Low," 46.
23. Jessica Weisberg, "Can Self-Exposure Be Private?," *New Yorker*, May 2, 2012.
24. Maiko Tanaka, "Feminist Approaches to Citation," *C Magazine* 126 (2015), 47.
25. Jeanne Randolph, "Out of Psychoanalysis: A Ficto-Criticism Monologue," in *Canadian Cultural Poesis,* ed. Garry Sherbert et al. (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 232.
26. Frank O'Hara, *Lunch Poems* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1964); John Cage, *Empty Words: Writings ' 73–'78* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), 79–98.
27. Joanna Walsh, *Break.up: A Novel in Essays* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2018).
28. Chelsea Rozansky, "Review: *Autotheory* Screening at Vtape," *C Magazine* 141 (2019): 72–74.
29. Rosalind Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," *October* 1 (Spring 1976): 50–64.
30. Martha Wilson, *Art Sucks*, (1972),video, 01:25 min., Vtape, http://www.vtape.org/video?vi=6874.
31. In this way, the work could be said to contain an exegesis of itself (as in *I Love Dick*, in which Kraus, in a chapter titled "Exegesis," theorizes her own work—and preempts critique—as part of an autotheoretical practice).
32. Kaye Mitchell, "Empathy, Intersubjectivity, and the Feminist Politics of the Auto," presentation at *AUTO-* conference, Royal College of Art, London, May 23, 2019.
33. Chris Kraus, *Aliens and Anorexia* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2000), 103.
34. Alanna Lynch, quoted in *Fermenting Feminism* catalogue, by Lauren Fournier (Vancouver: Access Gallery, 2019).
35. Kate Zambreno, *Heroines* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2012), 49.
36. Tanaka, "Feminist Approaches," 49.
37. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang 1997 [1967]), 142–149.
38. Zoe Todd, "An Indigenous Feminist's Take on the Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word for Colonialism," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2016): 17.
39. Jackie T. Cuevas, "Tejana Writing, Scholarship, and Activism: Living in the Borderlands with—and without—Gloria Anzaldúa," in Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012), 243.
40. Bhanu Kapil (@Thisbanu), "Citation is feminist memory," Twitter, December 30, 2015, 9:25 a.m.
41. McKenzie Wark, "Review: I Love Dick," Public Seminar, August 25, 2016, http://www.publicseminar.org/2016/08/ild.
42. Cauleen Smith, "Human_3.0 Reading List," *Human 3.0 Reading List* (blog), June 16, 2015, https://readinglisthumanthreepointo.wordpress.com/2015/06/15/june-16-2015.
43. Cauleen Smith and Lorelie Stewart, "Human_3.0 Reading List Postcards," *Human_3.0 Reading List* (blog), June 16, 2015, https://readinglisthumanthreepointo.wordpress.com

/human_3-o-reading-list-postcards.

44. There were fourteen books completed at the time Cauleen Smith wrote this entry, though there are now twenty-three books drawn by her and featured on her artist's website.

45. Smith, "Human_3.0 Reading List."

46. Carolyn Lazard, "How to Be a Person in the Age of Autoimmunity," *Cluster Magazine*, 2013.

47. Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory," *Mask Magazine,* January 2016, http://maskmagazine.com/not-again/struggle/sick-woman-theory.

48. Annie Jael Kwan, "Curatorial Introduction to *Finding Fanon*," presentation at the Royal College of Art, London, England, May 24, 2019.

49. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2005 [1961]).

50. Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, *Finding Fanon Part 1* (2015), video, 15:22 min.

51. Smith, "Human_3.0 Reading List."

52. Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, *Finding Fanon Part 2* (2015), video, 9:13 min.

53. Christensen, Fournier, and Sanader, "Speculative Manifesto," 267.

54. See Ariel Levy, "Who's Afraid of the Lesbian Haunted House?," *New Yorker,* October 28, 2019, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/11/04/whos-afraid-of-the-lesbian-haunted-house; Tausif Noor, "Review of Killjoy's Kastle at Icebox Project," *Art Forum*, November 4, 2019, https://www.artforum.com/performance/tausif-noor-on-killjoy-s-kastle-at-icebox-project-space-81221.

55. Love, "Low," 40–41.

56. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1988), 519.

57. Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue, "Female Voices with Lisa Steele," artist's talk, MOCA, Toronto, March 29, 2019).

58. Cait McKinney and Allyson Mitchell, *Inside Killjoy's Kastle: Dykey Ghosts, Feminist Monsters, and Other Lesbian Hauntings* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2019); Nicole Brossard, *The Aerial Letter*, trans. Marlene Wildeman (Toronto: Women's Press, 1987 [1985]).

59. Mitchell and Logue, quoted in Taylor, ed., *Deirdre Logue & Allyson Mitchell: I'm Not Myself At All*, 32–33; Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 49.