

WORKING:

a conversation between Andrea Geyer, Sharon Hayes, Ashley Hunt, Maryam Jafri, Kara Lynch, Ulrike Müller, Valerie Tevere, David Thorne and Alex Villar.

As an artist I have always understood my work as a combination of different practices. One of them is the ongoing discourse that I have with my colleagues around working, teaching, politics, theory and of course the challenges of every day living. By its nature this discourse is rarely public. Being invited by Carlos Motta, to contribute to artwurl in form of an interview, I suggested that instead of generating a new conversation, I would invite some of my colleagues to formalize some of the already existing dialogues that we have and have had over the years to be contributed to the magazine. What brings this group of artists together, I think, is a shared agency in our work that I hope will become visible in some of its layers over the course of this conversation. Formally we decided to each ask one question which will be answered by everybody else. We will publish the questions in succession over the course of the next issues of artwurl. I would like to thank you Carlos Motta for his invitation giving us the opportunity to develop this dialogue.

— Andrea Geyer

Stage 3:

Ashley Hunt: I'd like our discussion of fracture to hone in more specifically on the position of the speaker/author, its coherence, its fracture, its historical/material specificity. So far, Kara is the only person who's really been asking us to be specific about "subjects," their constitution and its relation to our strategies. But since many of our own backgrounds as artists were touched somewhere along the line by identity politics (if not actually formed within it), wherein, among so many other things, the meaning of a given work was more or less contingent upon the identity of its author, how does it figure into each of our work today? I'm of course NOT asking for us each to explain our own "identity," but I am wondering instead, at a time when critique of identity politics is in some ways theoretically sound and important, and in other ways racist, sexist and homophobic reaction, what roles do identity, identity formation and subjectivation, questions over the authority to speak, narrate, and not be spoken for play within our practice and methodology today? How do the various modes of privilege and domination experienced by differently positioned subjects figure into our choices or sites of struggle and our vision of change/solutions? And how does the question of identity complicate the dichotomy of Truth/relativism that we flirted with in the second round, a dichotomy that might force us to otherwise valorize or obliterate the person in the position of speaking?

Maryam Jafri: I agree with Ashley that critiques of identity politics—and indeed identity politics themselves—can be both theoretically sound and at other times racist, sexist and homophobic. I would argue that one way to look beyond this is to place greater emphasis on material and historical structures that are at work today in the building of (American) empire. In contemporary political domains, for example, the mainstream critique of identity politics has continued with its attacks on affirmative action, while at the same time offering up tokens of minorities in high positions of power, industry and government, who do not in any way challenge power, but whose very presence sanctions ongoing acts of domination formerly known as imperialistic and racist. For example, in the cases of Powell (the good cop in the Bush administration) and Rice's harsh indictment of Aristide, or Ahmed Chalabi's critiques of Saddam, their positions served to merely sanction the re-colonization of Haiti and Iraq. It is a sanctioning which unfortunately drew upon a humanistic idea of authenticity and essentialist (mis)reading of identity politics, i.e. how can an act be racist, sexist, homophobic, imperialistic, etc., when its spokesperson is from that subaltern group itself? On the other hand, who here hasn't been fed up with the media's ongoing obliteration of Iraqi voices? Who isn't sick to death of Bremer, speaking for the Iraqi people in his paternalistic speeches on the good deeds of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), but doesn't want to hear what these so called 'ordinary Iraqis' (who Bremer always refers to) wish to say themselves in its most potent manifestation of political speech—self government through direct elections, resulting in restored (not limited) sovereignty (which is a demand that the CPA certainly won't meet but that all of us must support). In my work I am increasingly interested in the point of insertion or intersection between the individual subject and a given external structure, be that a sub-culture, a nation state or a facet of contemporary capitalism. That is perhaps why Mouffe and Laclau's ideas are important to introduce at this point. But that I leave to someone else to do!

Kara Lynch: I'm not the one to insert Mouffe and Laclau—so that ball I will gladly drop and bounce to the other side of the court.

I will however pick up on Maryam's example of Condoleezza Rice, Colin Powell, Ahmed Chalabi, and I will add everyone's favorite, Clarence Thomas, as a point of departure. These are the folks who are called race traitors and sell-outs and such—but really, when were they ever on the side of anything but power politics as usual? Maryam reveals the racialized nature of these power politics. The possibility that these folks would or could ever represent black folks and our concerns is more about wishful thinking than the reality of how identity construction and subjectivity under the law works in the U.S. of A. I think this space that Maryam points to—the intersection between the individual subject and a given external structure—is both interesting and unsettling precisely because of the way folks like Rice and Chalabi function: to set up a clear division of politics and political affiliation, and at the same time create general confusion, somewhere deep, where most of us are secretly optimistic about the current state of affairs. Somehow their racial/ethnic coding stands between us and sound reasoning and we think, "there is no way that this

black woman could sell out Haiti," even though we know everything about Condi Rice—her education, her ideals, her affiliations—set her on a path to undermine the crumbling promise of Black independence in the Caribbean. It's this confusion that once again creates another division of race loyalty or identification—those who believe we are 'colored' by our experiences in a race conscious and constantly racializing system, and those who insist upon a color-blind society of universalized subjects, etc.



image by ashley hunt, 2004

I see the intersection that Maryam describes as unsettling and as a space to work because I associate it with the instance between identity and identification (Stuart Hall). It is a powerful space because it is constantly shifting and moving and has great potential for critically active work, but unsettling because it begs the question—at what point do we take a position and say what we need or want to say? (Is this the dilemma we faced when discussing fracture?)

I think Ashley's question asks us to both take a position and name a strategy: what are our politics and how do we communicate our convictions? Then we are left to make sense of how the two influence each other and determine how they service social/political change. It's interesting because in the best possible scenario, without the twisting and turning of terms by conservatives both on the right and in the Liberal camp, these questions are the ones raised through a process of identity politics.

Presently, I find I have two kinds of processes in my work: the work I do alone and the work I do with others: identity and identification. In the work I do alone, I would say that I take more risks aesthetically, formally, and by way of content. In the current project, I take a position—Eurocentrism is out, Black liberation is in. I am prepared to take on all of the potential and inevitable limitations of this ideology. The strategy is one of veiling and unveiling: what would happen if the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade disappeared? What if we could time travel? What if we could change something—would we? I propose a power and potential for action and innovation in non-subject positions that are off the radar, invisible. This looks like: performance/research, writing, drawing and video/audio installation. And yes, the strategies in the work reflect the politics and approaches I have to the subject matter. I gather found materials and then re-activate them. The idea is to evince a shift, nothing is a given, even my narratives refuse to be linear or narrativized.

The work I do with others has more to do with facilitating exchange and a conversation than it does with knowing answers or setting up proofs for scrutiny. I guess I would describe it as participating in creating a venue and a dialogue between folks who are loosely like-minded and move between isolation and alienation in their work and processes as artists and scholars. So the work is organizing and the strategy is facilitation. This sometimes looks like helping organize a national conference around art, technology and culture with a group of 10 women grad students; or facilitating a group of artists to build a dialogue that culminates in an exhibition worrying the question of a post-queer; or contributing to a collaborative project between artists on both sides of the Mexico/U.S. border that activates our various communities. Sometimes this looks like sitting on a screening committee for a queer film/video festival, contributing to this round-robin Wurl we've started, or me in the classroom, doing what I can to promote dynamic conversations that we can all learn from as both students and teachers.

These two processes feed each other, constantly tearing down and building up.

At this point, the key for me is that my practice has to be enjoyable in some way. I am not afraid of work, but it doesn't make sense any more for it to taste like medicine. There must be some love and/or joy in the process, otherwise I can't be involved. In both types of practice (individual and with others) I unravel more questions than I answer. I am not so interested in enlightenment as I am in revelation and retribution. If this sounds too religious or dogmatic it is because I wanted to see what could happen if I really took on Ashley's prompt. I also find that this is my role in this Wurl....

Ulrike Müller: I stumbled over a part of Ashley's question where he asked us not to explain our identities. "Why," I thought, imagining myself in the position of a reader of this virtual roundtable, "this exactly what I would be interested if I came across this text online. Who is talking?"

So obviously I am interested in identities, or demographics, as a basic guideline in social encounters: What's your age, gender, race and class background, and what do you look like? At the same time I enjoy being mistaken in those crude first impressions and strive to leave them behind. So here I am, a 33-year-old white

female bisexual artist from the descending middle class. And I know this doesn't tell you much—but it is a beginning.

When thinking of my own intellectual and emotional history, I cannot claim that I ever was involved in much identity politics. I became a feminist only after reading Judith Butler, and it was only through moving backwards from that point that I understood the importance and achievements of identity-based politics. I started thinking about politics and art at a point where gender identities were being destabilized, both in my lived experience and in the theory I was reading. I encountered the critique of identity politics alongside the very concept of identity politics, and this felt liberating. On the more pragmatic level of common interests, I remember endorsing Nancy Fraser's "strategic essentialism" as a political tool while at the same time embracing queerness, at first on a visceral level, as a concept that is not based on a pre-defined identity position, but on general feelings of unease and awkwardness when confronted with normative concepts that you're supposed to live up to.

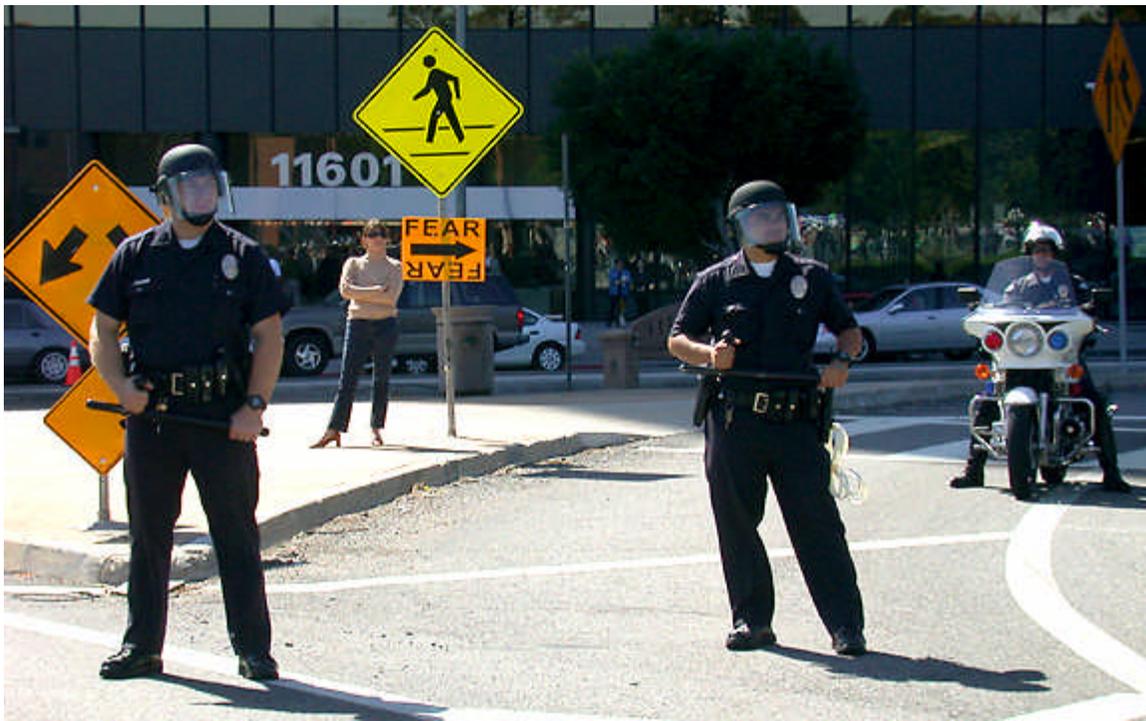


image by ashley hunt, 2004

Talking about myself is a start. In my art practice, I find it interesting when this starts to resonate with others, with the implied viewer, listener, or reader. I am confused and not in control of things that go on in the world. I am one of many and I am not entirely without influence, which loops back to the general question about

agency that hovers over this conversation. Most of what I do comes out of not knowing: it's the unanswered questions that keep me going.

When it comes to identity, I am interested in the dilemma of constant misjudging that it implies. I have thought about social positions and how these form the basis of one's ability to speak and act, and about how bodies are always bigger and more conflicting than the performance of social roles. I find myself insisting on singularity and interested in the position of "the freak," the person exhibiting their disabilities and thereby challenging notions of normality. This is about the spaces one can find to invent and express her or himself. There is no performance without a stage and an audience, and both of these can be found in art spaces. In the freak show, the freaks take the stage and the microphone and tell us that we are the real freaks. We—on the subways, on the streets, in our offices and studios—we who have learned to conceal our freakish singularities and recognize each other as "as-normal-as-me."

David Thorne: At the outset I will say I want to keep this short. I may be lying. The bad news comes thick and fast. Is there no end in sight? What was the question? I'm struggling to identify, let alone self-identify. One has, after all, to identify to respond to the bad news, no matter the character of the response, and so I am looking to identify, looking for what you might call "solid ground." I don't see this as a fool's errand even if I am willing to concede that there may not be any solid ground as such. This concession need not foreclose on the possibility of "taking a position," in all provisionality. Our discussion has, to a degree, turned to questions of "position," which pivot around (or emerge from in-between) identity and identification, as Kara deftly notes.

Let me identify myself by taking a position on the "torture scandal": The fuss over the disclosure of torture photographs from Abu Ghraib suggests it is something of an abomination that we should have to see these images. I agree. I prefer my torture practices remain undocumented. Or prefer, at least, that they only be documented on the bodies and in the psyches of persons I will never have to encounter, let alone have pictured before me. Now I am in the terrible situation of having to try to repress the fact that I can no longer repress or keep taciturn my tacit understanding that such practices have long been standard operating procedure during wartime (and, perhaps, if there ever were such a time, non-wartime), both at home and abroad. The secret pleasure I could generate for myself by generating images, in my fertile imagination, of torture, is all ruined now. What shall I do? A.) look at the photographs and express shock, awe, and disgust, as though my imagination had never been that fertile; B.) use the disclosure of the photographs as an opportunity to say "I told you so," and engage in deflective finger pointing in an attempt to remain out of the emerging picture; C.) join Amnesty International; D.) adopt a certain belief system which facilitates a continued disavowal of any self-implicating implications that arise from viewing these images—and from considering the acts the images document—by giving myself the go-ahead to seize the moral high ground from which I will (Soon! Soon!) be airlifted off the earth altogether in an event, much anticipated, known as "The Rapture"; E.) grapple with the complexities

of these events in hopes of forging a set of relations, affiliations, and identifications through which positions can be taken, seriously, and from which propositions can be made, hopefully, for the radical transformation of our shared political conditions. (Please note that I would neither contend that these conditions are shared equally, nor that conditions are "the same," universally, as it were; by "shared" I am suggesting something of the ways in which a range of conditions are mutually constitutive).



image by ashley hunt, 2004

From this inexhaustive list (which is not put forward cynically or facetiously), E. is perhaps the most appealing of the options, though it's hardly the kind of "concrete" I alluded to or "desired" in my previous contribution to this discussion. It is, however, part of what this discussion can "do."

My position, this morning, regarding the pain of others, is that I don't know what to do, apart from acknowledging on some level the banality of my complicity in the terror of current events. Is this not a "not knowing" that keeps me going?

"I never gave orders for anyone to be tor"

There is a clear position in that unfinished sentence.

I am not the person photographed shrouded, standing on a small box, wires attached to my fingers, toes, and penis, undergoing a process called (and “we would do well to remember the name”) “The Vietnam.”

I will vote against Bush, and for Kerry only against Bush. This, too, is a clear position, whatever its insufficiencies.

I trust this addresses all of the concerns that have come up in this round thus far, particularly Ashley’s request that we not each explain our own identity.

Valerie Tevere: David, I too would choose E. Thus begins my grappling through a terse examination of images of the ‘torture scandal’ in Abu Ghraib through their media re-presentation. Recent images (and the figures represented) set interesting scenarios that may sit between identity and identification. I’ll introduce two more figures to the mix—last year it was Jessica Lynch, this year Lynndie England—two low-level military characters involved in the Iraq invasion/ occupation brought to media attention. Each sits on an opposite side of the representational spectrum. The ‘hero’ and the torturer, or shall we say virgin and whore? One fabricated, the other documented. Not to discount the horror of the actions and incessant documentation, my question is in terms of representational strategies at play and who is represented as the aggressor in this scenario. The bombardment of images, or let’s say THE image (you know the one) of Lynndie England that graced the covers of tons of national and international magazines and newspapers is one that calls into question issues of domination including gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and religion. It’s a complicated one. Is this what comes with gender equality in the military, a perverse affirmative action? The continual reproduction of that image begs the question. Why the choice of this one among so many others? Still, here my focus is less on the act of abuse and more on the level of the image, but without the document, would the torture ever have been brought to international attention? Initially I was naively optimistic, perhaps the disclosure of these images would shift public opinion, change the course of the coming months, yet with Tennesse’s recent resignation overshadowed by Reagan’s death, one could say that these are images among oh so many other images. The only actions taken thus far have been against those pictured, instead of those behind-the-scenes.

Ashley, while using an example, I think this may peripherally address the question of positionality of speaker/author and its historical/material specificity—less so in relation to my work, but it’s all intertwined.

Epilogue: Now after the military abuses (and, as we’re reminded—“let’s not forget what has happened during Saddam’s day”), they discuss knocking down Abu Ghraib and rebuilding, but until that happens, photo booths and a GI photographer have been added to the its visitor’s center for detainee family use, and to help regain Iraqi trust in the U.S. military who oversee the detention center.

Alex Villar: In spite of my empathy with identity politics, I wouldn't say that my artistic sensibility was formed within it. Upon arriving in the U.S. at the end of '89, I began my gradual learning of identity politics. Coming from Brazil, which had then recently emerged from more than 20 years of dictatorship, I remained attached to the forms of cultural representation that were possible during that period of centralized censorship. I am referring primarily to strategies of subversion as opposed to direct confrontation—while the latter was important in fighting for amnesty for those in exile, only the former could sustain prolonged dissent to resist relentless misinformation. Identity politics seemed like a distant possibility. Clearly, this is an alternative that depends on a certain level of recognition of civil rights by the democratic state. A politics of identity, as I understand it, seeks recognition and the benefits of citizenship for those groups that fall beyond the limited scope of mainstream citizenship. It seemed like a good idea, definitely a necessity for many and indeed a possibility opened to some. It didn't seem and still doesn't seem to be the best alternative for people who find themselves in a state of dispersion, fragmented and divided by a variety of factors—for example: lack of 'papers,' illegal labor, etc. Luckily, a politics is exactly what it should be, one among many strategies. And we need to engage in a variety of fronts. There are many urgent matters, of course. Nevertheless, this should not diminish the relevance of sustained cultural resistance across the board. Over the years I became attuned to those articulations that describe subject formation through difference and plurality, as well as those political ideas that attempt to disentangle agency from identity. As a result, the work I do does not position the represented subjectivity as paradigmatic. Instead, it attempts to potentialize everyday experiences in the hope that, through tactical displacements, those sanctioned performances that consolidate hegemonic power would begin to be scrutinized.

Andrea Geyer: A quick comment on the images of torture: David, you do refer to it, but I felt the need to express it directly in the context of this discussion—the printing and public dissemination and, consequently, our individual viewing of these images is the ultimate wrapping up of the torture-act itself. It is the self-fulfilling prophecy of the exact moment of taking the picture, a picture that tortures via the humiliation of an image documenting the situation the victim is in. I know, the need/use for these images outside of the prison itself is to humiliate the torturer (and that goes all the way up, of course); they are used to confirm the hate against the oppressor on-site, and here to wake up a paralyzed (through ignorance, laziness, misinformation, poverty, overwhelmed-ness, etc.) public, to change opinion and ultimately change this administration. But nevertheless, the printing of them completes the torture of the individuals depicted and that is why I am deeply depressed about their prominent reproductions. Factually, one does not need to see the material image to know, to know of the misconduct of this invasion, to know that this administration (and many others) act illegally. As expressed already by David, torture is reality, has been, is and will be, no matter what high morals are claimed by the ones acting; the list is endless in the nature of torture, time, locality and ethnic set-up. This needs attention, much more than now, and has nothing to do with the

pictures. The pictures serve the torturer, and now us, in the desperate need for pressure we can apply to this administration. I think we should be sure to think deeply about our own interest in them as objects, and move the discussion toward what condition creates a reality in which anybody could possibly imagine (after all the proofs of history) that the depicted as such is not happening.



image by ashley hunt, 2004

In an attempt to combine the aspects that have been raised so far in relation to a standpoint/identity (Maryam with practice in the intersection between the individual subject and a given external structure; Kara following Stuart Hall's concept of identity as a sense of unity and commonality in relation to a process of identification that shows the discontinuity in our identity formation; Ulrike pointing to the (non)implication of a statement like "a 33 year old, white female bisexual artist;" David's move to placing identity as action and agency; Valerie in relation to ethnic profiling, and identification, this time from the outside; and Alex's account of identity politics as such viewed from a non-US context), I would like to bring in a quote by Thomas Keenan to introduce yet another set of terminology that might be interesting to discuss, especially in the background of the election and the actions of the Bush administration that have lingered in the discussion and in the reality of our art practice: ethics, politics, democracy and responsibility. In the introduction of his

book *Fables of Responsibility* (his dissertation) Keenan writes, promoting his use of deconstruction:

Ethics and politics—as well as literature—are evaded when we fall back on the conceptual priority of the subject, agency, or identity as the ground for our action. The experience of literature, ethics, and politics, such as it is (and it cannot be the experience of a subject), emerges only in the withdrawal of these foundations. This means that we are not interested simply in undermining or “deconstructing” foundational or essentialist ethico-political discourses, but in demonstrating that what we call ethics and politics only come into being or have any force and meaning thanks to this very ungroundedness. We have politics because we have no grounds, no reliable standpoints—in other words, responsibility and rights, the answers and the claims we make as foundations disintegrate, are constitutive of politics.

... Democracy in theory and in practice is the most rigorous effort we know to take into account the difficulties that condition, or de-condition our actions.

Experience of the self is conditional and temporal, as we all know and describe in one way or another. There is no fixed point and there is no fulfilling aim to reach or all-embracing origin to go back to. Applied to myself, through my voluntary displacement from my original ‘normative’ environment in relation to culture and language, that experience is a continuous one. On its negative side, it generates a passiveness, which is a combination of the impact of German history lessons (in the public school system), which offer us effectively as 2nd generation, in a way with no more than a position of passive guilt (instead of the motivation to move forward responsibly and radically against all notions of fascism that still prevail within the German society and beyond), along with the experience of being an immigrant now, in the U.S., at any moment confronted with the possibility of losing my residency for unpredictable reasons. Within that set up, I have been trying to be more aware of what Keenan describes: the modes and possibilities of action that afford responsibility on all levels (working and living) when the essential foundations of culture, ethics, and class are non-existent. Part of it I could call an experience of identity that is not relative but always relational; that could be, perhaps, the only position within which I could exist. It means that responsibility or its attempt could be the very ground/foundation from which to operate. In terms of my work, it also means understanding different practices not as essential and therefore oppositional, but as additive. In my case, one could say, I work on individual projects and with groups and teach and discuss and write and do some minor activism and etc.; and my friends use this strategy and my colleagues teaches this way, etc. Then the driving question within that for me is: What does it really mean to work collectively (not on the basis of self-fulfillment) on a critique of ideology, with a deep understanding and respect for difference, not only as a topic but as the structure and the means of production that we work with? And how does one realize this work under the conditions of the North American, European cultural sphere in which we exist?

Sharon Hayes: Ashley wrote: "I'd like our discussion of fracture to hone in more specifically on the position of the speaker/author." There is, I think, an interesting, relevant and yet unspoken collapse initiated by the / that Ashley placed between "speaker" and "author." The social encounter is never the textual encounter. In both speech and writing, there are myriad conventions that support, institute, frame and/or define the position of "speaker" and "author." These conventions function differently in different contexts: formal, informal, live, recorded, original, reproduced, etc.

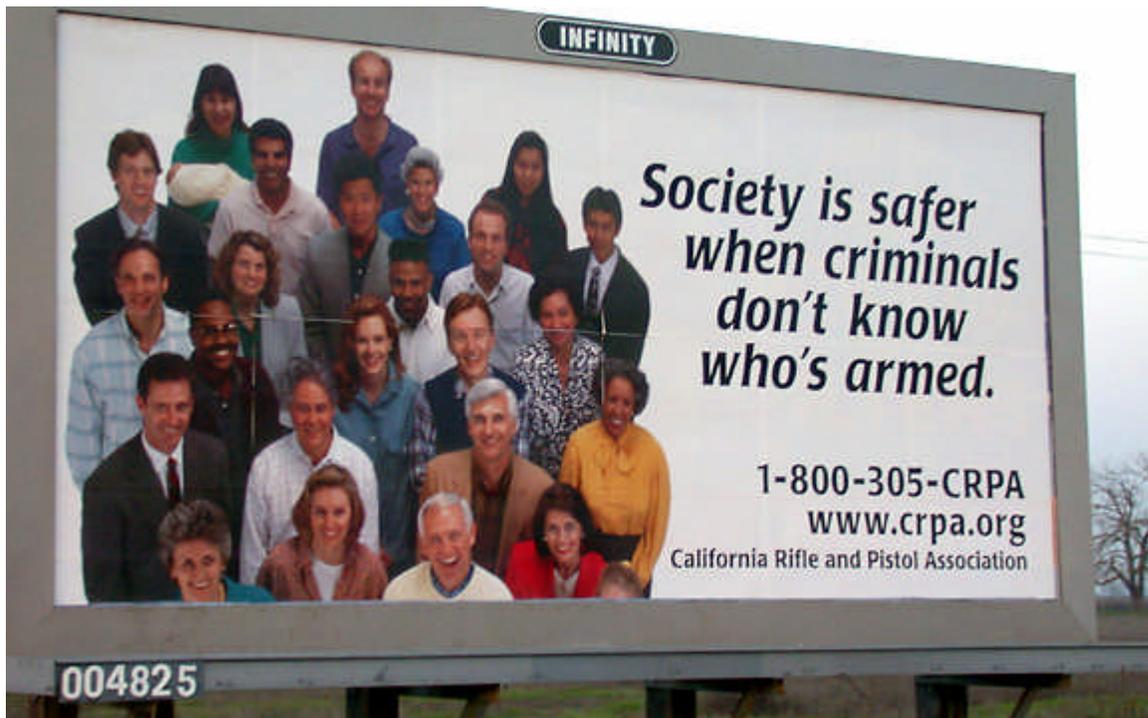


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In the social encounter, one or I guess one-who-speaks appears in physical form to shape, provoke and inspire projection, identification, etc. One's speech or one's precise role as speaker in that encounter is always a second or third player, supporting, resisting, contradicting the myriad constructions that come up in relation to the phenomenological. (In linguistics one of the primary non-verbal but constituent parts of communicating meaning through speech is paralanguage or the non-verbal accompaniment to speech: vocal dynamics, style, etc. I like this term "paralanguage" because of its reference to the "paranormal." Colloquially speaking that which exceeds normality and also exceeds our own control and sometimes perception.) The speaker may become an author in a sense, through an enunciation like "I am" whereby they attempt to construct themselves, but that enunciation is

always a strategy, a strategy which succeeds, against itself, in illuminating the tenuousness or the conscious construction of the border between "I" and "you", between "I" and "us" or between "I" and "them". In this sense, there is nothing but strategic identity/essentialism whether the speaker is aware that they are executing a strategy or not. So here, as Ulrike says, there is invariably misrecognition, misunderstanding, partial or contrary communication.

In writing, the split between a speaker and his or her enunciating presence is effaced and thus the "claim" of the writing "I am" becomes a claim amongst a collection of texts. There is no physical body to exceed, discredit, or belie the writing. The author becomes a text as much as his or her writing, functioning precisely in absence. There is and can be a debate between texts: the author as text and the writing as text; one text and another. But here I would say that the medium of our communication is part of the construction of our position itself. Such that my position as a speaker in any given exchange is invariably different from my position as an author of any given text and in both instances this position, as others have already pointed to, is relational. For all of these reasons, I think it is important to mark ourselves as speaker, author or artist in relation to our position rather than our identity. Identity, as a term of consideration, is useful to me for what it pushes toward but can never encompass on its own. I understand it always as "not-identity" or whatever other term can mark its necessity AND failure. Even in this form—the qualified and disclaimed—it does not get at the more relevant questions for me which revolve more around positionality than identity. For me, position is not static or fixed. It suggests a location but can never fulfill this implication. My position is where I choose to be, where I want to be and where I find myself placed by someone or something else. It is inclusive of both the conscious and the unconscious, and accounts for the factor of misrecognition, so importantly elucidated by psychoanalysis, in which I name myself as being somewhere I am not. Position is never mine but is mine in relation to someone or something else. In these ways, "position" accounts for what was always only latent in the term "identity," the play of desire. The naming of identity it seems to me is the articulation of a "desire to be" (or sometimes a "desire to not-be something else") more than a "being." In this way, I think it is quite interesting to look at the distinction between Ulrike's "I am" and David's "I am not." I offer this as an observation that there in that distinction is something quite pertinent to Ashley's question but without an attempt to trace out that specific pertinence right now.

Parsing out this difference between speaking and writing may seem an intellectual question, but for me it is integral to the particularities that I deal with in my work: speech and the historical, social, political conditions of specific speech acts. To deal with the conditions of speaking, authoring, artmaking, necessitates dealing with the conditions of hearing, listening, reading, receiving. I try in my work to interrogate my own desire. To construct my positionality as an element of the work such that it is an integral part of the dialogue initiated by the work itself, and as such that this very construction is open to a viewer, listener, reader to discuss, criticize, or debate.

CVs and weblinks:

Andrea Geyer lives and works in New York. Her work stresses the possibility of defining complex fluid identities in opposition to mechanisms which attempt to form and control static collective identities. Big cities are recognized as sites for projected images and fantasies, places of diverse political, ethnic, religious and social realities, integrating relations between human beings and their surroundings. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, Serpentine Gallery, Secession, Manifesta4, PS1 Contemporary Art Center, Parlour Projects and White Columns. She is a 2000 participant of the Whitney Independent Study Program. In 2003 she received a NYFA fellowship as well as a IASPIS residency. She is currently a resident at the Woolworth building LMCC space program. Over the recent years she has been involved in various curatorial and organizational projects among them Nomads and Residents, New York.

www.davidreedstudio.com/andreageyer.html

Sharon Hayes is an artist who employs conceptual and methodological approaches borrowed from practices such as theater, dance, anthropology and journalism. In her most recent work, she has been investigating the present political moment through a critical examination of various historic texts, including a speech from the 1968 democratical convention in Chicago and the transcripts from the audio tapes made by Patti Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army in the 1970s. Her work has been shown in gallery spaces and theatrical venues including the New Museum of Contemporary Art, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Andrew Kreps Gallery, Dance Theater Workshop, Performance Space 122, and the WOW Cafe in New York City. Hayes was a 1999 MacDowell Colony Fellow. She also received a 1999 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship and a IASPIS residency in 2003.

Ashley Hunt is a Los Angeles based artist who works primarily in video and multi-media. His main project of the last five years has been the "Corrections Documentary Project", exploring the political economy and relations of U.S. prison expansion.

<http://ashleyhuntwork.net>

<http://correctionsproject.com>

<http://prisonmaps.com>

Maryam Jafri is a video artist based in New York and Copenhagen. Her work centers on performance, narrative and gender. Her work has been shown in numerous exhibitions and screenings both in the US and abroad.

Kara Lynch is a time-based artist stretching her limits into space. Her work criss-crosses media, but she will own performance as her discipline and point of departure. Recent works include: 'Black Russians' 2001 117min documentary video; 'Mi Companera' 2002 12min video; 'Xing Over' 2003 6hr performance/2.36min 3 channel audio piece; 'Invisible: episode 03 meet me in Okemah, Ok circa 1911' 2003 7day audio/video installation. En exilio in La Jolla California, she retains a post office

box in Nueva York and a storage space in Western Massachusetts. She is a gemini monkey born in the momentous year of 1968.

Ulrike Müller lives and works in Vienna/Austria and in New York. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and in 2002/2003 was a participant in the Whitney Independent Study Program. As an artist she is interested in a critical feminist perspective on social, political and economic developments and their impact on everyday life.

Valerie Tevere - Driven by discursive practices, Tevere,s work has looked to the public sphere as a condition and framework for inquiry and discourse. Recent projects permeate the urban environment as temporal public works and performances that rely upon structured yet spontaneous encounters with city inhabitants. Tevere,s solo and collaborative projects have been exhibited internationally at venues throughout North and South America and Europe. She was a fellow of the Whitney Independent Study Program in 2000, a recipient of a Mellon Humanities fellowship at the CUNY Graduate Center 2002/03, and, as part of the radio collaborative neuroTransmitter, is currently in-residence at Eyebeam Atelier, NYC.

<http://www.neurotransmitter.fm>

David Thorne lives and works in Los Angeles. His recent work has addressed the conditions of so-called globalization; notions of justice shot through with revenge; and memory practices in a moment of excessive rememorations. Current projects include "The Speculative Archive" (with Julia Meltzer); the ongoing series of photo-works, "Men in the News" (1991-present); and "Boom!" a collaboration with Oliver Ressler.

www.speculativearchive.org

Alex Villar lives and works in New York. His work draws from interdisciplinary theoretical sources and employs video, installation and photography. His individual and collaborative projects are part of a long-term investigation and articulation of potential spaces of dissent in the urban landscape that has often taken the form of an exploration of negative spaces in architecture. His work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Institute of International Visual Arts in London, Museu de Arte Moderna in Sao Paulo, Paco Imperial in Rio de Janeiro, Tommy Lund and Overgaden in Copenhagen, Contemporary Art Centre in Vilnius, the Goteborg Konstmuseum in Sweden, Joanna Kamm in Berlin, Arsenal in Poland, Lichthaus in Bremen and Halle für Kunst in Luneburg, Exit Art, Stux Gallery, the Art Container and Dorsky Gallery in New York. He holds an MFA degree from Hunter College and is a 2000 graduate of the Whitney ISP. In 2003, he received a NYFA fellowship.

www.de-tour.org