

# Me Lo Dijo un Pajarito

*Neurodiversity, Black Life, and the University  
as We Know It*

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**Erin Manning**

But the student has a habit, a bad habit. She studies. She studies but she does not learn. If she learned they could measure her progress, establish her attributes, give her credit. But the student keeps studying, keeps planning to study, keeps running to study, keeps studying a plan, keeps elaborating a debt.

—Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons*

She studies, starting in the middle. She reads, always from the outside out. She speaks, stuttering from the edges of language. She fails, her work refusing to order itself to the measure she has been given.

She restarts, the work pulling at her again. She rereads. She knows she should read something new. But those familiar words just have a taste she can't resist.

She studies, working from the edges. She reinvents, from the middle. The form stumps her. She forgets to cite. She forgets that there was a beginning, a place from which knowledge traced itself. She forgets to impress. She doesn't pass.

In a private exchange, she writes:

And of course the question on ecological ways of knowing and producing may surface and we listen. i guess it is always a question of limit, scale and elasticity, a question of an ecosystem that would allow for unattended or decapitated expressivities to come forth. In spanish there's an expression that i truly love: 'me lo dijo un pajarito,' a bird told me. my 8 year old son

talks with birds constantly since he was very little. me lo dijo un pajarito also moves with the possibility of a secret that you know without necessarily knowing in the common way of knowing, towards undercommon ways of cawing.<sup>1</sup>

What are these undercommon ways of cawing, the sounds lost, left behind, not only unaddressed but unregistered, in the systems of power/knowledge we call academia? What cannot be heard? What cannot be listened to? And what are the stakes of the performance of knowledge that plays out in the name of the “norm” that upholds what is too often generalized around the concept of “quality” or “rigor”?

### **Neurodiversity in the University**

Creating the conditions for neurodiversity in the university is not about creating a space for difference, a space where difference sequesters itself. It is about attuning to the undercommon currents of creative dissonance and asymmetrical experience always already at work in, across, and beyond the institution. It is about becoming attentive to the ways in which the production of knowledge in the register of the neurotypical has always been resisted and queered despite the fact that neurotypical forms of knowledge are rarely addressed or defined as such. It is about exploring a juncture, a cut I perceive in the here-now, a change I want to linger with, that puts the university at risk in the very same gesture that it puts neurodiversity at risk. It is about asking what happens when the turn toward neurodiversity begins to be felt in a way that neurotypicality is truly threatened.

In “Body/Power” Foucault writes: “One needs to study what kind of body the current society needs.”<sup>2</sup> While the university is certainly not the only site of power/knowledge, I turn to the university for this account of “what kind of body the current society needs” because it is a site of contestation where the exception often reigns in the name of alternative pedagogies and practices, a site where many of us, myself included, imagine other ways of working and sometimes are even able to activate them. I turn to the university because there is a troubling asymmetry at the heart of teaching and learning practices, on the one hand creating a path for new ways of thinking and making while on the other imposing forms of knowledge that do violence to the bodies they purport to address. I turn to the university because there is of necessity a discontinuity between the individual and collective practices of experimentation it houses and the neoliberalism that undergirds it. I turn to the university because it has been a site of resistance and a site where new orientations toward study have been born: black studies, queer socialities, postcolonialism, disability studies. And I turn to the university because most days I am not at

all certain that the site for these explorations and activations of power/knowledge is actually capable of the kind of complex work necessary for the decolonization of knowledge, at least not as long as the centrality of the (white) (neurotypical) human as purveyor and guarantor of experience reigns supreme.

What has shifted in the university as regards neurodiversity is the steady entry into the bounds of its edifice not only of neurodiverse bodies but also of accounts of what neurodiversity brings. Those bodies that “pass” have been there all along, functioning at the limits of what constitutes the docile body they, we, have been taught to mimic. The other bodies, the ones classically excluded, remain excluded for the most part, but there are exceptions, and these more visible exceptions are troubling what it means to be included in the edifice of learning. They are making themselves heard, teaching us how to bring facilitation into the classroom, reminding us of how inaccessible most of our practices of teaching are, how unaccommodated the nondocile body remains despite the many academic discourses that circulate supporting its presence. It is not the number of the visibly neurodiverse in the academy that is making the difference I am noting (I have never had a classical autistic actually enrolled in one of my classes, though many have attended on Skype, uncredited) but the growing realization that they are there, that they require accommodations most classrooms cannot provide, that together it is urgent that we imagine—tent on the edges of the room to facilitate nonfrontal modes of attention—what else teaching and learning could be. These experiments in sitting together differently, our faces not the center of attention, our words typed and not spoken, hands stimming, our bodies jumping, have affected my sense of what the learning body can look and sound like (including my own), and it is this learning, allied to language’s otherwise rhythms, to the stims and tics and poetic utterances that come of engaging asymmetrically with language’s modalities of communication, that move me to write with and against the university as we know it.

With the writings and movements of these bodies, of our bodies, shared at their pace through the wild library of neurodiversity blogs on the internet, and published, more now than ever, in the academic presses—still understood as guarantors of the intelligibility of knowledge—have come new propositions for ways of learning, new questions about the relationality of facilitation expressed always with the confusion about how it is that we could figure pedagogy as being anything but a site facilitation.<sup>3</sup> It is these interventions, as well as those of artists who write sideways into the academy, making art that refigures what expression can look like, that move the diagram of power/knowledge in the institution and mark this moment of recalibration. Of course, the diagram is always mobile, and it is shifted by more tendencies than those I can name here—the point

is not to reduce the undercommons of the university to these tendencies but to add them to all the others that, like termites, have been eating the walls and reshaping them to their needs. Perhaps one way to speak of this moment is precisely to speak of proliferation, of the inability to name (or even to hear) all that is at work and all that is at stake.

What interests me are these termite-ridden walls and the questions they ask, urgently, about whether the sites of power/knowledge we build and sustain are really equal to those who inhabit them.

Spinoza speaks of the institution as a pact, reminding us that what we live in is also what we build, and what we take down.<sup>4</sup> What is the pact the university demands? What bodies does it need to survive? What knowledges?

The asymmetries the university produces are reflected in the asymmetries of its “we,” asymmetries of duration and scale. Placing the power (or repression) in the individual won’t begin to address the complexity of the bodyings that chew at the joints of its foundations. To speak of us, the we, as one, as identifiable, as measurable, would be to underestimate the creativity of our movements. It would make us human, all too human, when in fact our bodyings are transversal, collective before they are individual, more-than. It would also underestimate the power of capital that runs through each artery of the institution, connecting to speeds and durations also always more-than human. Any “we” is always already composing at the interstices of these uneasy collaborations between different valences of the more-than.

Other approaches are necessary, probably approaches that move at the speed of termites, unbuilding the edifice from within in strategic duplicity with durations more-than human. Because trying to accost the system from another angle, trying to break the system from within its own modes of intelligibility, will in the end reduce us to victims and perpetrators, to humans firmly enveloped in a dream of self-sufficiency. We must instead begin with the differential of the more-than human that composes us, with the tendencies that make us more-than ourselves, engaging the edifice of power/knowledge not frontally but with the very asymmetrical durations that (de)compose us. Connecting to power/knowledge this way may allow us to hear how else knowledge is being crafted on the under-common edges where a caw can be heard, attuning to modes of knowing that exceed capture. From this perspective we can feel the dissonance between the rhythm of the work produced in the undercommons and the university’s own glacial pace, committed, despite rhetoric to the contrary, to modes of knowing that are all too human. Despite the wealth of work that goes into attempting to alter the system from within, despite the extraordinary research that pushes back against the norms of knowledge production, despite the resistance on the part of artists to ally to industry,

preferring instead to engage in a pragmatics of the useless that explores alternative modes of expression, alternative modes of existence, the problem remains: the university is a slow-moving machine. It is structurally incapable of changing at the speed of the thought that moves through it.

The university is beyond rebuilding. The building is already beyond repair. The outside is pushing in. Outside doesn't mean a space already created. Outside is the undercommons working it, eating it from within. There is no space preexisting that can replace the buildings in ruins. The undercommons must always be invented anew. It is a question of moving sideways, of attuning to the sideways movements already there, following their line of flight.

The urgency of these undercommons cannot be ignored. We are moving through them, but are we proliferating enough? Are we inventing at the speed, in the duration, of the movements of thought that move us to ask what else it can mean to know? Because when neurodiversity makes itself too keenly felt, when it refuses to adhere to norms of neurotypical knowledge production, the university as machine for existing power/knowledge resists, it must resist, and the more noise there is, the more the university will be at risk, and the more it will resist. The more *we* will resist. This is particularly the case when the student, she who studies but doesn't learn-to-measure, refuses to adhere to the labels that mark her as a liability for the pursuit of knowledge. She will not pass. She will not get credit. And this will matter because she is still paying, she is still in the system of debt and credit, and we have promised her that the system knows how to enfold her. We have admitted her. She will not be one of the few students who are allowed to flow through the membrane, the few who are given the opportunity to mark their difference, a difference that only works to keep the norm in place. Or if she gets through one membrane, she won't get through the next one, she won't get the job—or the tenure. Because we won't know how to recognize her difference. We won't have created a space where it can be sequestered. She will not have given us the tools to do so, to space her as one of the few who should receive an exception, as one of those who need to populate our otherwise white, neurotypical environment in order for it to have been inclusive.

Difference will always be accepted to a degree. As long as the norm is upheld, it will always be good to have a few exceptions, especially when those who enter that space clearly mark themselves as different. But she is not one of those. She doesn't want to speak in the name of her difference. She doesn't want to teach you how to know her, how to write about her. She won't speak for all indigenous people, for all black people, for all queer people, for all autistics. She won't explain. She will resist citing you. She isn't interested in "according to." She won't be aligned, she won't be colonized. Not because she is a rebel, but precisely because she operates

in another mode, in the mode of the more-than that listens to undercommon ways of cawing. From the perspective of this more-than always yet to be composed, to be speciated, she won't presume the symmetry rebellion presupposes. She won't presume neurotypicality.

### **Power/Knowledge**

Power is never individual. The individual is, at the very most, the expression of its passage, not its operator. These teachings of Foucault's are often backgrounded in analyses of power that would still situate power within the bodies that wreak destruction or suffer its consequences. It is important, in thinking about the systemic nature of power in the university, to clarify how power operates, how it is at once ours and beyond a "we" that preexists, how power is a mode of circulation more than it is a targeting practice. Power is what moves through the diagrams that cocompose us. As Foucault writes, "The individual is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces."<sup>5</sup>

To work with the circulation of power, it is necessary to move beyond body to bodying, beyond the notion that there are preexisting individuals that are powered by a hierarchy that measures their movements. The university is not a field that operates through such cut-and-dried hierarchies.<sup>6</sup> The university is a diagram of power through which "we" are created and recreated as power/knowledge bodyings. "We" are the university, emboldened to become bodies under circumstances we cocompose. Or, at the very minimum, we are a field of forces that makes it possible for those tendings-toward-bodies the university promotes to keep agglomerating. It is "we" who make its thinking possible, even if only by remaining in its midst. And it is "we" who pass or fail those for whom the qualities of bodying the university presupposes and creates are insufficient to survive and to thrive in its framework.

Bodying as a verb reminds us that bodies are a field of forces through which individuations emerge and shift. How a body individuates depends on the circumstances of its surrounds, on the ecologies that compose it, here, now, on the histories that orient it, on the futurities that give it potential or unmoor it from the grounds of its participation in the world. These orientations toward difference are pragmatic and operative. How a body becomes the body it is, here, now, the body it is identified to be, also depends on what it means to be a body, here, now, on the stakes of the form-taking, on the limits of that form. Bodies are routinely obliterated at the very point where they individuate into this or that recognizable form. Much is at stake in the shape of individuation: there is no doubt

that a continuous policing occurs that denies bodies the potential of their transitions, of their becomings, solidifying them from the outside into an identity that cannot be assimilated. I am thinking of the spastic body, of the disabled body, of the trans body, of the black body, of the lower-caste body—there are so many who populate these unassimilable categories. What is important, I think, is to recognize that these captures are occurring because of the threat of bodying. What is terrifying is the very potential at the heart of bodying, the potential for a body to become, to shift, to alter the conditions of life-living, life in the register of the more-than, life beyond a dichotomy of the human and the nonhuman. To ask what kind of body our society needs is to take the operations of power seriously and to inquire, each time anew, how this body, how this neurodiversity, shifts the field of experience, shifts the terms of power/knowledge.

Bodying is a process we all engage in. Usually, we become a body we already recognize, reproducing ourselves in the image we have come to associate as ours. This is particularly the case for those among us whose bodyings are least contested, those whose whiteness, whose neurotypicality already conforms to the mold of what a body should be. When Edouard Glissant incites us to “consent not to be a single being,” he is reminding us, I think, that the mold of that one form, that one body, should never suffice, that relations are what compose us, relations always in excess of the given, relations as the radically empirical more-than that continuously refashions what it means to world.<sup>7</sup>

Bodying need not include an alignment with humanism, with existing modes of defining what it means to be human. This is something I learn from autistics such as Tito Mukhopadhyay, Adam Wolfond, D. J. Savarese, Amelia Baggs, Frank Bissonnette, Donna Williams, and Lucy Blackman, who remind us about the more-than that animates the field of experience that is life living. Through their work, each in their own way engages a reorienting of what matters in experience to include the constitutive field of the more-than in the edgings of the not yet. Amelia Baggs’s 2007 video *In My Language* perhaps still stands out as the most chilling account of how nonspeaking autistics are excluded from the realm of the human, their personhood extracted precisely because of the breadth of more-than human feeling their language, their living, includes.<sup>8</sup> In her eight-minute video, in which the first four minutes are spent listening to, smelling, and touching the objects around her and the next four minutes are spent typing on a voice-activated computer, she says:

It is only when I type something in your language that you refer to me as having communication. I smell things. I listen to things. I feel things. I taste things. I look at things. It is not enough to look and taste and smell and feel. I have to do those to the right things . . . or else people doubt that I am a think-

ing being, and since their definition of thought defines their definition of personhood so ridiculously much they doubt that I am a real person as well.<sup>9</sup>

There are an infinity of gestures coming out of the neurodiversity community that repeat this experience that neurotypical folks have a much too limited idea of what constitutes experience, a perceptual dearth that doesn't allow for the vividness of the more-than of worlds in the making.

There is a certain resonance here with accounts from black studies coming from scholars such as Fred Moten, Stefano Harney, Sylvia Wynter, Frank Wilderson, Alexander Weheliye, Jasbir Puar, and Ashon Crawley around the concept of black life. Frank Wilderson writes: "Though it might seem paradoxical, the bridge between blackness and antiblackness is 'the unbridgeable gap between Black being and Human life.'" Blackness, Moten writes, "must free itself from ontological expectation, must refuse subjection to ontology's sanction against the very idea of black subjectivity."<sup>11</sup> This is not to say that black bodies are not sites of power's contestation but to emphasize that the "paraontological distinction between blackness and blacks allows us no longer to be enthralled by the notion that blackness is a property that belongs to blacks (thereby placing certain formulations regarding non/relationality and non/communicability on a different footing and under a certain pressure) but also because ultimately it allows us to detach blackness from the question of (the meaning of) being."<sup>12</sup>

I turn to these voices in black studies to ask whether there isn't an important bridge to be built between neurodiversity and black life, particularly around the question of how else experience could be articulated within the register of the more-than where the stakes are not to measure experience against the worn concept of humanity as defined in the West but with the force of an ontogenesis that moves in rhythm with the emergent sociality of bodying. Because bodying and sociality cannot be disentangled.

Sociality is perhaps the connection here, between black life and neurodiverse life, sociality as an emergent quality of bodying, as an emergent force for the more-than that is life living. Speaking of entanglement and what Denise Ferreira da Silva calls "difference without separation" in the context of singer Bessie Smith, Moten writes: "I think of Bessie as an effect of sociality—she was sent by sociality to sociality, in that way that then allows us to understand something about how the deep and fundamental entanglement that we are still exists in relation to and by way of and as a function of this intense, radical, constant differentiation."<sup>13</sup> Is sociality not the bodying, the quality of black life, the force of form that activates what Moten calls the "radicalization of singularity" of a difference without separation?

## Research-Creation

Foucault writes: “It is a case of studying power at the point where its intention, if it has one, is completely invested in its real and effective practices. What is needed is a study of power in its external visage, at the point where it is in direct and immediate relationship with that which we can provisionally call its object, its target, its field of application, there—that is to say—where it installs itself and produces its real effects.”<sup>14</sup> In *The Minor Gesture*, I wrote about the way I see study, as Fred Moten and Stefano Harney define it, as aligned with a certain version of research-creation. This alignment involves seeing research-creation—the entry into the university of artistic practice at the doctoral level—as the potential destabilizer it is in relation to the ways in which the university tends to mobilize knowledge production. The shift toward research-creation in the university has taken place roughly over the past decade (though there are examples of research-creation that are much older, even going back to the medieval university in the case of music), unsettling the certainty of what counts as knowledge and what can be valued, or evaluated, as “contributing” to the field. The problem, of course, is that the field of research-creation, if it is a field, is still under construction, testing its limits, wondering about its place, or even if it wants to take (a) place.

Research-creation, as SenseLab has argued over more than a decade of practice,<sup>15</sup> can be an alignment to the ways in which study itself is a practice. It can be a mode of inquiry that asks what (other) forms learning can take. It can refuse to privilege the materiality of language over other materialities while at the same recognizing thinking as a creative practice in its own right. When practiced this way, research-creation creates the conditions to ask how the theory/practice split continues to give knowledge production a certain linguistic overtone, understanding practice more as that which needs to be studied than as study itself.

When the artist refuses to produce an object as the object of her work, when the artist refuses to be the subject of the work, when the philosopher refuses to write at a distance, when the work becomes the practice, when the practice invents its own language, research-creation deeply threatens the power/knowledge that holds the academy in place. It was fine to have the artist in the academy as long as the artist behaved like an artist, as long as the object could be defined. As long as there was something to evaluate.

The bodyings crafted through such neurodiverse acts, the life that moves through the acts that resist the neurotypicality of knowledge production, create new diagrams for thinking. Power begins to circulate differently. Knowledge inflects to excite a rethinking, a reorienting of what study can be. “Power is employed,” writes Foucault, “and exercised

through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.”<sup>16</sup> It’s not simply that power is circulating differently, that new ways of knowing are finding temporary forms, that new forms of practice are shifting the process of coming to something we might call knowledge. It’s that bodyings are created in the practicing, bodyings that trouble what it means to be a student, to be admitted as a student in the circuit of debt and credit that is the university as we know it. Deeply engaged, thinking wildly, touching the limits of thought, the becoming-body can finally stim as much as it needs to, connecting to the world’s rhythms, its bodyings out of sync with the forces that would seek to capture it, outside the cycle of recognition that would identify it as the guarantor of university’s system of debt and credit.

## The Outside

Deleuze writes:

Between power and knowledge there is a difference in nature or a heterogeneity; but there is also mutual presupposition and capture; and there is ultimately a primacy of the one over the other. First of all there is a difference in nature, since power does not pass through forms, but only through forces. Knowledge concerns formed matters (substances) and formalized functions, divided up segment by segment according to the two great formal conditions of seeing and speaking, light and language: it is therefore stratified, archivized, and endowed with a relatively rigid segmentarity. Power, on the other hand, is diagrammatic: it mobilizes non-stratified matter and functions, and unfolds with a very flexible segmentarity. In fact, it passes not so much through forms as through particular points which on each occasion mark the application of a force, the action or reaction of a force in relation to others, that is to say an affect like “a state of power that is always local and unstable.”<sup>17</sup>

If the asymmetry between power and knowledge concerns the relation of force to form, what happens to knowledge when it begins to resist the very idea of form as final mode of knowing? How is its force of form altered by the conditions of study that don’t hold to the human as central to experience, that heed indigenous and black and neurodiverse and queer forms of knowing? What does knowledge look like when it has become unmoored from its capture as form?

Foucault speaks of “a new type of relation, a dimension of thought

that is irreducible to knowledge.”<sup>18</sup> This dimension of thought, this outside of recognizable knowledge is not new. It already exists—we hear it in the stories passed down through generations as told to us by indigenous scholars, we feel it in the care for material practices as shared to us by African American quilt makers, we hear it in the break “where that shit breaks down.”<sup>19</sup> Thought irreducible to practice moves outside the registers of categorization, shifting the conditions of undercommon ways of cawing. We don’t need a university for this—in fact, the university often closes down the registers of sociality this kind of study needs to thrive. I often return to the lines from Moten and Harney when I consider what else knowledge could be, reminding myself that all we need to activate thought that is irreducible to knowledge is a porch:

When I think about the way we use the term “study,” I think we are committed to the idea that study is what you do with other people. It’s talking and walking around with other people, working, dancing, suffering, some irreducible convergence of all three, held under the name of speculative practice. The notion of a rehearsal—being in a kind of workshop, playing in a band, in a jam session, or old men sitting on a porch, or people working together in a factory—there are these various modes of activity. The point of calling it “study” is to mark that the incessant and irreversible intellectual-ity of these activities is already present. These activities aren’t ennobled by the fact that we now say, “oh, if you did these things in a certain way, you could be said to be have been studying.” To do these things is to be involved in a kind of common intellectual practice. What’s important is to recognize that that has been the case—because that recognition allows you to access a whole, varied, alternative history of thought.<sup>20</sup>

The outside is the name Deleuze and Foucault give to the circulation of forces at the heart of power’s operations where thought remains irreducible to knowledge. The outside is not the exterior (as opposed to an interior). It is not spatial—it is intensive. The outside is what remains unthought in thought, what remains unfelt in feeling. It is what accompanies all emergent relationalities, what moves with all social life in the making. “The outside concerns force: if force is always in relation with other forces, forces necessarily pertain to an irreducible outside which no longer has a form, made up of nondecomposable distances where one force acts upon another or is acted upon by another.”<sup>21</sup>

Power works from the outside, but never from the outside-in: “It is always from the outside that a force confers on others or receives from others the variable affection that exists only at a given distance, or in a particular relation.”<sup>22</sup> An outside without inside is a force without a form. Form is a constellation of effects that body, here, now, in just this way. While there is no question that power also contributes to how a form-

taking occurs, Foucault's insistence on the importance of the outside is a reminder that power always also carries an excess, a more-than that is not captured by the form itself. "There is therefore a becoming of forces which remains distinct from the history of forms, since it operates in another dimension."<sup>23</sup> Bodying is an example of this: a body is a coming-into-itself that orients the effects of power toward a certain taking-form. What makes it a bodying is that this taking-form composes with registers that are rife with other potential orientations. Bodyings are not simply form-takings, they are the activation of the force-of-form toward emergent shapings. These emergent shapings have histories and genealogies and futurities. How they come to be what they are, here, now, matters. But this "just now" is always also more-than the shape it has momentarily taken. Consent not to be a single being: move the relation.

The outside is an intuitive concept for the more neurodiverse among us. It is what accompanies all experience in the making. What leaves those traces that still vibrate on the edges of what we call objects. It is the edgings into experience, the colorings of time, the echoes of futures on the cusp that interrupt that chunking neurotypicals continuously seek in their search for categories. It is the world that isn't yet quite there before the chunk, the world that that accompanies without quite situating itself, a kind of continuous refrain that orients the not quite of all form-takings. It is the intensities that so many don't seem to hear, those intensities that are continuously getting in the way of the human voice—that privileged site of human expression, the intensities that whisper to us that the world is lively and living beyond the space the human takes. The outside is not where most of our knowing is focused, though those of us who teach art have an affinity for it. We may speak in terms of hunches, of feeling, of affect, of tendency, of force—all of these synonyms for that which participates but cannot be circumscribed. This is not the knowledge we've been taught to recognize, not the knowledge of forms already captured. The outside is not the formed matter, the segmented, the archivable. It is the anarchic share of striated knowledge, the share of experience which resists scripting yet nonetheless affects what the script can do. Anarchival knowledge, neurodiverse knowledge, is not outside form as much as in the cleaving between form and force. It is what calls knowledge back to its edgings-into-experience. It is the diagram, the force of form, of knowledge where knowing meets unknowing.

When knowledge begins to escape stratification, when its form begins to blur, its anarchic share surfacing, its alignment to power also shifts. Power and knowledge begin to compose differently. It's not that knowledge is no longer irreducible to power—Foucault's point, after all, is that this irreducibility is what gives the potential for resistance. It's that

the irreducibility begins to scintillate in ways that give knowledge the breadth, the force, to subvert the striations that usually constrain it.

Perhaps, at the point of scintillation, *knowledge* is no longer the right term. *Study* is a better term. Or research-creation. These are thicker concepts, I think, for the texture of what I am trying to gesture toward, when I speak of knowledges unknowing. But for now, I want to hold on to the possibility that the term itself, that *knowledge* could still be carried forth as that which has the capacity for doing the work differently, if only to emphasize the trouble neurodiversity brings to the academic institution, trouble that most often erupts around the question of who knows how to know.

### **Emergent Socialities**

The emergent collectivity of worlds remaking themselves through knowledge's yield creates socialities. Language is one way these socialities express themselves.

Speaking of “the social zone of blackness,” in the context of the undercommons, Moten and Harney bring forth a distinction between the social and the political. About the Black Panthers, they write: “The Panthers theorized revolution without politics, which is to say revolution with neither a subject nor a principle of decision. Against the law because they were generating law, they practiced an ongoing planning to be possessed, hopelessly and optimistically and incessantly indebted, given to unfinished, contrapuntal study of, and in, the common wealth, poverty and the blackness of surround.”<sup>24</sup> For Moten and Harney, the social carries the outside in a way the political can't partly because politics already knows where it stands in relation to black lives. The social is what can still be fashioned, a social not of existing subjectivities, but of emergent socialities, emergent ways of encountering the aesthetic yield of experience. Emergent sociality refuses representation. It produces not a constituency, but a fugitivity. As a force of the outside, sociality is not what already exists. It is what is crafted in the relation.

Neurodiversity, and particularly autism, is often referred to as the most asocial of modes of living. It is a sign of our neurotypical human-centeredness that we only feel heard when we have eye contact, when the body we are speaking to consents to be a single being, excluding its more-than-human tendencies. So much meaning is given to the way attention is oriented (pay attention!) that we rarely stop to think of the violence of those frontal modes of attention that force us to block out the scintillations of the world and its many qualities of attending. When the neurodiverse among us listen, they listen to those scintillations, they are moved

by them, hearing the more-than that echoes across the threshold of the sensory. Sometimes this is just too much, but always it is there, moving amodally across the bodying activated by the relation. This relation is not only to me, to you. It is a relation to the world as it has come together just now, here. A relation to the field of experience making itself. Eye contact is ridiculous in this context, ridiculous because it misses so much. There is no emergent sociality in the pressure to pay attention in just this neurotypical way. Emergent sociality is a listening-with the array of potential socialities in our surrounds. Moved by the outside, it asks that sociality be invented anew each time, that the world, and worlding become the occasion for study.<sup>25</sup>

When autistics are framed as arhetorical, it is usually around the concept of sociality. Melanie Yergeau writes: “My flapping fingers and facial tics signify an anti-discourse of sorts: Where is my control? Where is my communicability? Would anyone choose a life of ticcing? How can an involuntary movement, an involuntary neurology, a state of being that is predicated on asociality—how can these things be rhetorical?”<sup>26</sup> In the neurotypical model of sociality, the measure is always that of communication as direct exchange. I speak, you look and listen. Then you speak, connecting your thoughts to mine. When this doesn’t happen, when the encounter doesn’t read for the neurotypical as communicational, the response is depersonification, dehumanization: “Autism is frequently storied as an epic in asociality, in non-intention. It represents the edges and boundaries of humanity, a queerly crip kind of isolationism. We, the autistic, are a peopleless people. We embody not a counter-rhetoric, but an anti-rhetoric, a kind of being and moving that exists tragically at the folds of involuntary automation. Our bodyminds rotely go through the motions, cluelessly la dee da.”<sup>27</sup>

Cluelessly la dee da. Me lo dijo un pajarito.

### **The Free Indirect**

Emergent sociality edges into experience as the force which unmoors expectations about the relationscapes that compose us. It speaks from the corners, from the ledges and edges and thresholds of experience still taking form. It flies off the bodying with sparks, it stims and tics and hollers. It melts down when the world is just too much to take, the tensions of the world speeding like lightning along the body’s feeling—always feeling—surfaces. The world is too much, and yet it is lived, fully, again and again to a limit unconceivable for most neurotypically inclined. Neurodiversity invents life—life-living.

The invention of socialities is a study in living, a living study. It speaks often in pronouns intermixed—it is not unusual to hear autistics

speak of themselves in the third person. A cold coming on, Adam Wolfond writes: “I think my body jumps because I am feeling sick. I think I have a cold in my boy nose. I am really wanting razor sharp always feeling body to be very calm and I want the body to wash away like the water you use. I want the water to always give me answers about how to stay quiet in my body. My body is always trying to stay calm. Talking as you do is away from the way my not very calm hated body talks. Hated is calming way of Adam and always questioning and asking people.”<sup>28</sup> At once I and Adam and boy, Adam and the cold cocompose, water the teacher that may give the directions to ordering the body within neurotypical parameters. Because having, being a moving autistic body is dangerous in a neurotypical world. Not only will it get you sidelined (as unintelligent, as deviant)—if you happen to be autistic and black, it may also get you killed.<sup>29</sup>

The stakes are high, the body must stay still, and words must come out in the order in which neurotypicals can hear them, can order them. Pronouns must be adjusted or we will be seen as stupid. This is something I’ve heard too often. And yet no language proceeds directly. This is what Deleuze and Guattari teach us in their chapter on linguistics in *A Thousand Plateaus*. “Me lo dijo un pajarito” is how the linguistic utterance actually functions. Knowledge, as it moves through language, always comes sideways. “Language,” write Deleuze and Guattari, “is not content to go from a first party to a second party, from one who has seen to one who has not, but necessarily goes from a second party to a third party, neither of whom has seen.”<sup>30</sup>

Heard from the sidelines, what is it about language that makes us believe that it is direct, unmediated? It is the order-word that does this work, ferrying the free indirect into the semblance of direct communication. An often redundant structure of language, the order-word is what organizes the potential disorientation of the free indirect quality of language, providing the utterance with a history of directions. “An order always and already concerns prior orders, which is why ordering is redundancy. . . . When the schoolmistress instructs her students on a rule of grammar or arithmetic, she is not informing them, any more than she is informing herself when she questions a student. She does not so much instruct as ‘insign,’ give orders or commands. A teacher’s commands are not external or additional to what he or she teaches us.”<sup>31</sup> Speaking in the free indirect, catching language in the making, the order-word is carried in the performance of what the instructor does not actually need to say. The school, its habits, the teaching expectation and pedagogical format enforce a certain organization of knowledge that moves through the free indirect to give it the form of a command, here, now. It is not language that constrains knowledge, but the order-word that moves through it.

In the manyness of language, order-words are the mechanism of

orientation that keeps language in check. For Deleuze and Guattari, the order-word is the “elementary unit of language.”<sup>32</sup> “We call order-words, not a particular category of explicit statements (for example, in the imperative), but the relation of every word or every statement to implicit presuppositions, in other words, to speech acts that are, and can only be, accomplished in the statement.”<sup>33</sup> Order-words keep the saying in check. And yet, textual disarray is continuously unmooring language, unfastening it of its order-words. The emergent sociality of textuality is just too complex. In an interview with Fred Moten, Stefano Harney writes: “The one thing that I was thinking about as you were talking about the text being a social space is it’s exciting for me when we get to that point where the text is open enough that instead of being studied, it actually becomes the occasion for study. . . . I think that this notion also applies in the social space of the text itself, even where the study is not yet apparent.”<sup>34</sup>

“There is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation.”<sup>35</sup> Enunciation is deeply social, even when spoken in solitude. It is not only that language carries histories and futurities, but also, and especially, that language speaks through us, across us. In this sense, language also makes us, our bodyings alive with the sociality of expression. This is the case whether we use the words or not—Amelia Baggs makes that abundantly clear. There is language without text—language is also movement, sound, texture. This is Deleuze and Guattari’s point: emergent socialities speak languages on the edge of decipherability where what moves is not the order-word but passwords collectively invented and then forgotten. Language can never quite be captured: “There are pass-words beneath order-words. Words that pass, words that are components of passage, whereas order-words mark stoppages or organized, stratified compositions. A single thing or word undoubtedly has this twofold nature: it is necessary to extract one from the other—to transform the compositions of order into components of passage.”<sup>36</sup> We’ve all felt it—the joy of a new concept, a password for the creation of worlds—the taste of the thinking it creates, the force of the movements it allows.

When allied to language, emergent socialities are collective assemblages of enunciation—*agencements collectifs d’enonciation*. The French is necessary here to mark the specificity of the concept of *agencement*, often lost in translation. Agencement is not a form in any sense of the word (neither is it an arrangement). Agencement assembles—it is the movement-toward, the orientation that creates the conditions for a process to “take.” Collective assemblages of enunciation are machines of language, mobilizers of potential that motor expression toward articulation. They remind us that the content of language can never be abstracted from its expression: “What comes first is not an insertion of variously individuated statements, or an interlocking of different subjects of enunciation, but a collective

assemblage resulting in the determination of relative subjectification proceedings, or assignments of individuality and their shifting distributions within discourse.”<sup>37</sup> Sociality before, and between, in the relation.

Free indirect discourse has no intrinsic morality. This is why its sociality must be invented each time anew, and why the collective assemblage of enunciation it crafts must be tested for what it can do at each juncture. Concepts are only as good as the living they create, more-than human. “It’s been said that,” or “but this is how it’s always been done,” or “as three people told me” are indirect discourse’s everyday weapons. Order-words are infinitely cunning in their ability to appear where you least expect them. And if you count on a single password, you will get locked out, stuck under the weight of past usage, the concept no longer operative in the current landscape. New landscapes will always require new concepts, or at least, new ways of creating conceptual passwords. It takes practice but what beautiful work it is to make language sing, to hear language’s abysses, to move to its tics. This is also the power of its indirect discourse, to include what has been excluded, to make room for the minor gestures of sociality which, over time, may be capable of shifting the register of what can be thought, of what it can mean to know.

Order-words are less language than the condition for “the superlinearity of expression.”<sup>38</sup> They are only one of the ways language is moved from its field of potential to its pragmatic instantiation, here, now. We must not be cowed by them. But to make the turn toward the conceptual work of creating living passwords, we do have to train ourselves to hear undercommon ways of cawing. Because the neurotypical mode of listening always hears the human voice before the caw, and almost never hears the undercommon ways of cawing. As Daina Krumins writes: “It’s not that I could hear better, although I could hear much higher pitches than most people, but I was aware of what I was hearing. Most people attend to voices above all else. I attend to everything in the same way with no discrimination, so that the caw of the crow in the tree is as clear and important as the voice of the person I’m walking with.”<sup>39</sup>

This is not to say that the neurodiverse don’t hear the order-word. We are all trained to respond to its call. It’s just that for some of us it’s much more difficult to separate things out, to give expression to only one aspect of experience. Or, we may have other modes of communication that simply don’t allow us to respond in ways that tell the interlocutor that we’ve heard the order-word. Or perhaps we’re done with the order-word, having been condescended to for too long. Not rebellion exactly, but deep exhaustion with what the neurotypical takes for granted as concerns the linearity of expression. Sometimes order-words are all we can hear. And still we are told that we are beyond teaching, that we cannot be civilized. Isn’t it the case that autistics have historically been accused of

being incapable of hearing order-words, and isn't it this in large part that has excluded them from a claim on personhood? Isn't that what applied behavioral analysis (ABA) is all about: hearing and responding to the order-word?

Ido Kedar writes: "In ABA years I lost hope . . . I felt I lost many years in this lonely endeavor. 'Touch your nose.' 'Touch tree.' 'Touch your head.' 'Look at me.' 'Do this.' 'Sit quiet.' 'Touch red.' 'Good job.' 'Hands quiet.' 'No.' 'Great.' 'No.' 'All right.' 'No.' . . . My life is better now. . . . I'm communicating with more and more people now. Though I still get sad, it's true, I'm not hopeless. Now I'm living in a flashcard-free world. I'm never touching my damn nose again."<sup>40</sup>

The order-word, as Deleuze and Guattari make clear, is not the imperative per se. The order-word is the force of the presupposition that moves through the imperative, telling Kedar over and over again that his ways of communicating are not only without value, but fully outside what even registers as communication. Like many autistics who eventually speak with the help of keyboards and automated speech programs, Kedar makes it clear that there was a wealth of communication before anyone registered it as communication. Speaking of his first moments working with Soma Mukhopadhyay, the autism expert who would assist him in learning to communicate through text, Kedar writes:

I was tasting my first communication [through text] and all my experts saw were the prompts, not the communication. . . . My ABA supervisor told my mom that it made no difference if I could communicate or not. I would continue to be taught in the same way with the same flashcards and drills as if I still didn't know my verbs, categories, adjectives, pronouns and so on. . . . [My mom] told me that the whole team sat and argued with her that I couldn't really communicate because I didn't with them. How could I with them? I only got drills or behavior modification. How was I to communicate with them? Spontaneously erupt in song and dance? Talking was impossible. Writing I could do with support but they denied me that. . . . So what's left? The data that didn't fit the model they threw away. If I was silent there, I must be silent everywhere, including internally.<sup>41</sup>

The order-word is communication that does not fit our model is no communication at all. That communication requires sociality, that support is at the heart of communication, that language is a form of emergent sociality—none of these mattered. Because the ABA specialists had decided there was no communication. Kedar continues: "Soma didn't teach me to read. She taught me how to get language out of my head. It was not an easy process because it was swirling internally with no way out. It's awesome to liberate my thoughts. People take this for granted and talk such dopey things all day. I choose each word carefully. I want it to matter."<sup>42</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari speak of “making audible nonsonorous forces.”<sup>43</sup> Moved beyond the register of the order-word, language begins to do something else. It begins to make heard the nonsonorous forces that populate it, the ways of knowing that curb it toward modes of sociality yet to be invented. When Baggs moves through her living room sounding the furniture and smelling the books in her video *In My Language*, when she turns on the tap and cuts the stream of water with her fingers, sounding all the while, when she taps the dresser and turns the knobs and scratches the computer case, language is moving (through) her. This is her point: that language moves and that its movements are lost to those of us who seek to hear only how language stops thought, how it signifies and orders expression. In Pier Paolo Pasolini’s words, what if “the essential thing, precisely in free indirect discourse, is to be found neither in language A, nor in language B, but ‘in language X, which is none other than language A in the actual process of becoming language B’”?<sup>44</sup> Baggs’s language is never hers alone. It is the language that moves across sensibilities that exceed the range of the human voice, that speak not only in words but also in textures and in the sounds that resonate with them.

Undercommon ways of cawing trouble order-words and the matrix of signification that keeps them intelligible. They do this all the time. What happens if we begin listen?

### **More-than Human**

What is it about the stimmy, ticcy, or spastic body that threatens neurotypicality? What is it about it that so readily reads as unintelligent, unknowing? Is it its unabashed excess? Its uninhibited wealth of expression? Is it the fact that it makes felt the breadth of intensity signification can never quite capture?

We know that bodies get in the way of learning, of knowing, of speaking. Otherwise, why would we have to sit in chairs all day, stand still when we speak, and stop to pay attention? Is that why neurodiversity is so threatening to neurotypicality’s certainty about what it means to know? Because neurodiversity bodies language? Is that also what is so threatening about black life? That it moves? That it moves sound, language, life in ways as yet uncharted?

How does a “poethics of blackness,” Denise Ferreira da Silva’s term, connect to neurodiversity, to neurodiverse life? Gesturing toward decolonial ways of living, of writing, a poethics of blackness “announce(s) a whole range of possibilities for knowing, doing, and existing,” writes Ferreira da Silva.<sup>45</sup> What kinds of emergent sociality are invented at this interstice?

Emergent sociality is an ecology of practices. Always more-than,

always more-than human, emergent sociality moves at the speed of the unformed that courses through the formed. What we hear at the interstice: the anarchic share of experience that accompanies experience in the making.

Alexander Weheliye writes:

Black life is that which must be constitutively abjected—and as such has represented the negative ontological ground for the Western order of things at least for the last five hundred years—but can never be included in the Western world order, especially the category of Man. Phrased differently, there can be no black life in the territory of Western, humanist Man, which is why the existence of black life disenchant Western humanism.<sup>46</sup>

A similar account moves through the writings around neurodiversity: “Autistic bodies . . . these are bodies that not only defy social order, but fail to acknowledge social order’s very existence. Autism, then, poses a kind of neuroqueer threat to normalcy, to society’s very essence.”<sup>47</sup> A more-than defies the concept of the human in both cases, a more-than that deeply unsettles the human as he is defined by the (white) discourses of neurotypicality. The human as the omnipresent category that holds dominion over knowledge in every walk of life. Who speaks the order-word of the human. From whom do we hear it?

The more-than moves experience, its shape unsettled. It can’t be counted. It can’t be known as such. But it matters. It matters in that it qualifies, orients, thickens, and textures experience in the making, reminding us that the human is a junction, an interstice toward a certain quality of shaping, of speciation.

This speciation is a diagram, a field of forces that activate a set of relations through which certain becomings occur. This diagram is a mode of survival as much as it is an orientation for the creation of new modes of existence. For the ways in which power and knowledge agitate on its vectors has effects as regards what else living can be when life is no longer organized by the neurotypical diagram that places Man in the center of the panopticon.

The diagrams for life-living activated by the emergent socialities of neurodiverse life are never perspectival. The diagrams are always askew, asymmetrical, unbound by forms that would constrain them. They are wild, anarchical, messy. These diagrams, fashioned of knowledge always still in the making invite us, incite us to connect to how else we can unknow, unown the language of the order-word as it has been passed down, neurotypical generation after neurotypical generation.

Fred Moten asks: “Is there knowledge in the service of not knowing, of study as unowning knowledge?”<sup>48</sup> The unknowing, the unowning of

knowledge takes courage. An abyss awaits where passages have not yet been invented.

### **In the Ruins**

The university is in ruins, I heard. Me lo dijo un parajito.

The university is in ruins, she said. That colonial space that didn't allow my voice, that didn't hear my cry. He said.

It was just too human. Too full of subjects. Too disciplined. Too corporate. It couldn't survive.

The student has no interests. The student's interests must be identified, declared, pursued, assessed, counseled, and credited. Debt produces interests. The student will be indebted. The student will be interested. Interest the students! The student can be calculated by her debts, can calculate her debts with her interests. She is in sight of credit, in sight of graduation, in sight of being a creditor, of being invested in education, a citizen. The student with interests can demand policies, can formulate policy, give herself credit, pursue bad debtors with good policy, sound policy, evidence-based policy. The student with credit can privatize her own university. The student can start her own NGO, invite others to identify their interests, put them on the table, join the global conversation, speak for themselves, get credit, manage debt. Governance is interest-bearing. Credit and debt. There is no other definition of good governance, no other interest. The public and private in harmony, in policy, in pursuit of bad debt, on the trail of fugitive publics, chasing evidence of refuge. The student graduates.<sup>49</sup>

Pursue bad debt! Study beyond credit!

Except the university is still there, and she still has debt and no credit.

And we're still teaching, still hiring, still investing your debt. Still paying my mortgage. Still distributing my grants. Still organizing my calendar. Still calling meetings.

I hear the cry. They don't pass. The work they do is not accepted as knowledge. "I see no research here," I am told. "This doesn't look like work." "You are not supervising adequately." "You are not doing your job."

I've paid my debt and now I have credit. And I'm afraid of losing it. Aren't we all?

But I can't stand it, I can't stand the measure of value. And so I study, I learn to study in the undercommons of the university.

I have never learned so much, never studied quite this way. I am a student.

I know some of us will get through. I am a professor, I made it

through the gates, passed every single hurdle until I hit the highest ceiling. I thought it would protect us. I thought it would make it possible for me to squeeze you through the membrane. But they didn't let you through. We didn't let us through.

In the end, we are the termites. We eat away at the structure, residing in the holes we create. They are warm and we can nest. There is some comfort here. But at night, when we scurry around the hallways listening to the anarchic, I hear echoes of other modes of study, and I hear you hear them too.

## Notes

1. Text exchange with Mayra Morales, 18 March 2017.
2. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 58.
3. A selection of these excellent blogs include *As small as a world and as large as alone* by Mel Baggs ([withasmoothroundstone.tumblr.com/archive](http://withasmoothroundstone.tumblr.com/archive)), *Unstrange Mind* by Sparrow Rose ([unstrangemind.com/about/](http://unstrangemind.com/about/)), *Estee Klar* by Estee Klar ([www.esteeklar.com](http://www.esteeklar.com)), *Polly's Pages* by Donna Williams ([blog.donnawilliams.net/](http://blog.donnawilliams.net/)), *Autistext* by Melanie Yergeau ([autistext.com/about/](http://autistext.com/about/)), *Ollibean* by Amy Sequenzia ([ollibean.com/author/amy-sequenzia/](http://ollibean.com/author/amy-sequenzia/)), *NeuroTribes* ([blogs.plos.org/neurotribes/](http://blogs.plos.org/neurotribes/)), *Autistic Hoya* by Lydia X. Z. Brown ([www.autistichoya.com/p/about.html](http://www.autistichoya.com/p/about.html)), *Radical Neurodivergence Speaking* ([timetolisten.blogspot.ca](http://timetolisten.blogspot.ca)), *Neuroqueer* ([neuroqueer.blogspot.ca](http://neuroqueer.blogspot.ca)), and *Shaping Clay* by Michael Scott Monje Jr. ([www.mmonjejr.com](http://www.mmonjejr.com)). Two recent academic press publications are Mukhopadhyay, *Plankton Dreams*, and Yergeau, *Authoring Autism*. For more on facilitation as relational pedagogy or what I call "the facilitation of facilitation," see "Carrying the Feeling" in Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, 131–64.
4. Balibar, *Jus-Pactum-Lex*.
5. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 73–74.
6. The managerial university has not yet arrived in Quebec in the way it has taken hold in Australia and the United Kingdom, but it is certainly coming, and when this happens the conditions of power/knowledge will change again because it won't be "we" who operate the university in the way it currently is, with professors holding the positions in the administration. The university I write about here is still much closer to the one we might want to teach in, where knowledges circulate quite freely and where students still pay relatively little tuition. But it would be short-sighted to suggest that, just because it's not as bad as it could be, it's good. The conditions for learning are compromised when the diagrams of power/knowledge are not addressed, particularly in these neoliberal times.
7. Glissant, *Poetic Intention*, 5.
8. I've engaged in more detail with this important artwork in the chapters "Thought in Motion" in *Relationescapes*, 213–28, and "Toward a Leaky Sense of Self" in *Always More than One*, 1–15.
9. Baggs, *In My Language*, 5:45–6:16.
10. Quoted in Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness," 749.
11. Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness," 749.
12. *Ibid.*, 749–50.
13. Moten, "An Interview with Fred Moten."
14. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 97.
15. For more on practices and philosophies of research-creation at the Sense-

Lab, see Massumi and Manning, *Thought in the Act*, 83–134, and issues of Sense-Lab’s journal, *Inflexions: A Journal for Research-Creation*.

16. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 98.

17. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 73.

18. Quoted in *ibid.*, 74.

19. Moten, “An Interview with Fred Moten.” Fred Moten begins *In the Break* with the following: “The history of blackness is a testament to the fact that objects can and do resist. Blackness—the extended movement of a specific upheaval, an ongoing irruption that anarranges every line—is a strain that pressures the assumption of the equivalence of personhood and subjectivity. While subjectivity is defined by the subject’s possession of itself and its objects, it is troubled by a dispossessive force objects exert such that the subject seems to be possessed—infused, deformed—by the object it possesses. I’m interested in what happens when we consider the phonic materiality of such propriative exertion. Or, to invoke and diverge from Saidiya Hartman’s fundamental work and phrasing, I’m interested in the convergence of blackness and the irreducible sound of necessarily visual performance at the scene of objection” (1). Breaking the shit down is about the work of an arranging at the heart of black life or, better said, the play, the music of it, the sound of it, the listening of it. “Is there a way,” Moten asks, “to subject this unavoidable model of subjection to a radical breakdown?” (5).

20. Moten and Harney, *Undercommons*, 110.

21. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 86; translation modified.

22. *Ibid.*, 86; translation modified.

23. *Ibid.*, 86; my translation.

24. Moten and Harney, *Undercommons*, 18.

25. *Ibid.*, 109.

26. Yergeau, *Authoring Autism*, 11.

27. *Ibid.*, 14.

28. Adam Wolfond in a typed conversation with his mother, Estee Klar, 19 March 2017.

29. Many autistics and autistic advocates worry about the ways in which autistics and meltdowns can read as dangerous to police and worry about the possibility of violence. This is especially the case, given the current racist climate, with black autistics. Spencer, “Miami Police Shoot Black Caretaker.”

30. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 77.

31. *Ibid.*, 75.

32. *Ibid.*, 76.

33. *Ibid.*, 79.

34. Moten and Harney, *Undercommons*, 109.

35. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 79.

36. *Ibid.*, 110.

37. *Ibid.*, 80.

38. *Ibid.*, 85.

39. Krumins, “Coming Alive in a World of Texture,” 86–87.

40. Kedar, *Ido in Autismland*, loc. 1301.

41. *Ibid.*, loc. 1838.

42. *Ibid.*, loc. 1449.

43. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 95.

44. Quoted in *ibid.*, 105.

45. Ferreira da Silva, “Toward a Black Feminist Poethics,” 81.

46. Weheliye, “Introduction,” 5.

47. Yergeau, *Authoring Autism*, 36.  
 48. Moten, “Blackness and Nothingness,” 242.  
 49. Moten and Harney, *Undercommons*, 67.

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