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‘Wittig and Davis, Woolf and Solanas (…) simmer within me’: Reading Feminist Archives in the Queer Writing of Paul B. Preciado.

> What kind of feminist am I now: a feminist addicted to testosterone, or a transgender body addicted to feminism?[i] I have no choice but to reconsider my classics, to submit these theories to the shock provoked in me by the practice of administering testosterone. To accept that the change taking place within me is the shifting of an era.[ii] (TJ, 21)

In Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs and Biopolitics (2008), queer theorist Paul B. Preciado questions what his own transgender embodiment might mean for him as a feminist. What kind of feminist is he, now, incorporating an androgen which ‘masculinizes’ the very cells of his body? One might assume that the cause of Preciado's concern is rooted in the tensions between transgender politics and some strands of feminism which read transsexuality and gender transition as naturalizing or reifying the gender binary, a position often associated with radical feminism and the ‘second wave’. Preciado’s preoccupation, however, is not with any sense of incompatibility between feminism and transgender identity. In fact, his text frequently deploys feminist ‘classics’ – even those hostile to transsexuality – in the aid of understanding his transgender identity and the effects of testosterone on his body. He also uses these feminist works with the aim of understanding the effects of the new era he references above. This article begins by questioning what can be learnt from Preciado’s work regarding the relation between feminism and transgender theory, and how both can be understood in the new era of biocapitalism Preciado proposes. It follows with readings of Preciado’s interactions with various and diverse ‘second

wave' thinkers, activists and artists, asking how we conceive of trajectories of feminist thinking and activism, as well as how we might consider the practice of collecting feminist and queer archives.

The Shifting of an Era.

Testo Junkie is at once an autobiographical account of its author's 'experimentation' with pharmaceutical testosterone and a work of theory drawing on Judith Butler's performativity, Foucauldian biopolitics, Teresa de Lauretis's accounts of gender and technology and Donna Haraway's cyborg feminism. Preciado uses these theorists to consider what he describes as a new 'era' of biocapitalism; a 'pharmacopornographic era' in which the combined effects of the pharmaceutical and pornographic industries are felt on each of our bodies (TJ, 23). His words here echo Foucault's announcement of the arrival of 'the era of 'bio-power' in his first volume of the History of Sexuality (1976) (HS, 140).[iii] Indeed, Preciado builds upon Foucault's work to argue that power no longer acts upon bodies, but infiltrates them with the material effects of a pharmaceutical or by excitation through pornography.

Preciado describes an explosion of biocapitalism in the middle of the 20th Century, initiating a 'new type of capitalism that is hot, psychotropic and punk' and which involves 'new, micro-prosthetic means of controlling subjectivity' (TJ, 31). He writes that 'this is the era of soft, light, viscous technologies, gelatinous, injectable, inhalable, incorporable', adding that 'the testosterone I administer (…) belongs to these kinds of soft technologies' (TJ, 74). The latter half of the 20th Century witnessed the development and widespread consumption of the contraceptive pill; the creation of menopausal HRT; Ritalin; Viagra and Prozac. In addition to this (but

inseparable from it), Preciado notes the clinical discourse on and regulation of 'transsexualism' from sexologists and psychiatrists including John Money, Harry Benjamin and Robert Stoller; all of whom insisted on medical standards for 'correct' gendered behaviour and presentation, as well as protocols for gender reassignment bound up with pharmaceutical hormones. Preciado's argument, however, is not that transgender identity and embodiment are any more constructed than those of cisgender individuals. Ultimately, Preciado argues in Testo Junkie that the workings of capital in this new era have fundamentally changed and along with it, the ways in which all gender and sex is constructed. Far from naturalizing binary gender, transgender identity in his work highlights how fictions of gender and sex are not simply a matter of linguistic or discursive productions, but are now supplemented – constructed, even – by pharmaceuticals: Preciado offers as examples the 'natural' rhythm of a menstrual cycle regulated by the contraceptive pill; the 'heroic masculinity' of athletes built on doses of steroids as examples of 'biocammoflage' (TJ, 156). 'You too,' he writes, 'you are the monster that testosterone awakens in me' (TJ, 348). The 'shifting of an era' Preciado describes above refers to this new era of biocapitalism, and it is 'the shock' of this new era that must be taken into account in contemporary feminism, leading him to revisit the feminist 'classics' to which he refers.

Feminist Classics.

Preciado offers a sustained, bodily engagement with feminism across the 'waves', with his work often turning to feminist thinkers, activists and artists of the 1960s and 70s to understand the material, bodily effects of the 'shifting of an era' he describes above. He repeatedly uses feminist figures of the 'second wave' to understand his transgender identity, experience and embodiment.

Amongst these diverse figures are Simone de Beauvoir; Valerie Solanas (author of the SCUM Manifesto (1967), infamous for shooting Andy Warhol in New York in 1968); as well as American feminist performance artists from the 1970s including Faith Wilding, Nancy Angelo and Candace Compton.

Firstly, despite her reductive remarks on transsexuality in SCUM, what could be described as Solanas's extinctionist approach to gender relations informs Preciado's refusal of binary gender identity. Solanas majored in psychology, and her brief remarks on transsexuality in SCUM betray a transphobic, psychoanalytic understanding of the subject years before either Catherine Millot's Horsexe (1983) or Janice Raymond's The Transexual Empire (1979). In addition to the radically essentialist understanding of gender/sex Solanas offers (the male is a walking abortion, the XY an incomplete XX chromosome), she wrote:

> Women (…) don't have penis envy; men have pussy envy. When the male accepts his passivity, defines himself as a woman (…) and becomes a transvestite he loses his desire to screw (or to do anything else for that matter; he fulfils himself as a drag queen) and gets his cock chopped off. He then achieves a diffuse sexual feeling from 'being a woman' (SM, 5)[iv]

In this brief remark, Solanas repeats many of the misapprehensions of transsexuality originating in psychoanalytic theory, which make generalizations based on the Judge Schreber case discussed by Freud and Lacan: that transsexuality is always a desire on the part of men to become women; that this desire is primarily sexual; and that the desire to become a woman is a desire for radical (and sexual) passivity.[v]

Remarkably, Preciado still uses aspects of Solanas's thinking. Even more remarkably, he

does so as a way of understanding his identity as transgender. He writes that 'Solanas (…) understood things with a certain clarity (…) one sole thing seems to have changed: every grotesque characteristic Solanas attributes to men in capitalist society at the end of the 20th Century seems today to apply to women as well' (TJ, 124-5). Preciado cites Solanas in SCUM, supplementing her language with his own post-Foucauldian terminology:

> Men and women are the bioproducts of a schizoid sexual system leading to their own destruction. Both men and women are 'deficient, emotionally limited' creatures, 'egocentric, closed in on themselves, incapable of empathy, of identification, love, friendship, affection or tenderness' (TJ, 125)

It is this Solanas-inflected, radically negative, almost apocalyptic thinking on gender and sex that leads to Preciado's own statement on his gender identity at this point as neither man nor woman: 'I don't want the female gender assigned to me at birth. I don't want the male gender promised by the medical establishment, that the State would award me if I behaved as I'd need to. I don't want any of it' (TJ, 125).

Another, albeit very different, figure of the 'second wave', Simone de Beauvoir, is recalled by Preciado. Her name is evoked as he attempts to understand not only his identity, but also his transgender embodiment: the ways in which biological matter – a single hormone, even – is overlaid with gendered constructs. He writes:

> When she rejects me, I feel the oestrogen inside me building, I realise I could cry at any moment (…) under my skin, the monster of the feminine cultural programme awakes: my

> body has been trained to produce the affects of women, to suffer like a woman, to love like a woman. Taking testosterone is insufficient to modify this sensorial filter. Fuck Beauvoir. Fuck feminism. Fuck love. (TJ, 278)

In these words, Preciado offers an appropriately teenage response to the heady hormonal brew permeating his body. While his statement 'Fuck Beauvoir' is impolite, it is the sort of retort a teenager might aim at a parent whom they know is right. Beauvoir's systematic compilation in The Second Sex (1949) of the weight of gender enveloping female bodies, with chapters on childhood, through puberty to marriage, motherhood and menopause, is so thorough as to render it almost unshakeable. Beauvoir's assertion that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, woman' (SS, 330)[vi] affirmed the social construction of gender enveloping the material body, rendering 'woman' with a body that is 'something other than her' (SS, 63). The root of Preciado's antagonism is surely that in this moment, Beauvoir's creeping sense of fatalism regarding the female body seems to him all too real.

Preciado adds Beauvoir's powerful compilation of the gendered attachments which stick to the female body to his molecular analysis. Indeed, Beauvoir had already asked if 'femininity (is) secreted by the ovaries?' (SS, 23), writing that 'Woman has ovaries and a uterus; such are the particular conditions that lock her in her subjectivity; some even say she thinks with her hormones' (SS, 25). Preciado questions this notion of subjectivity locked in by the material, genedered body: what it could mean to feel oestrogen building? Does he feel this hormone itself, or what he believes to be its effects? How could he differentiate? While science debates the precise effects of oestrogen on mood, the stereotype of the weeping, hormonal woman is pernicious. As Beauvoir had done, Preciado questions the way in which gender clings even to molecular biological substances: testosterone and oestrogen. In fact, on his account above, it

seems to him as though these cultural attachments outweigh the matter themselves: the mere material impact of introducing the molecules of testosterone to his skin, to his bloodstream, are not enough to shake off what we believe to be the effects of oestrogen on our bodies, the way in which gender has 'trained' these bodies.

In the new biocapitalist era Preciado has announced, the theorization of gender must take into account the weight of cultural discourse enveloping the molecular, the pharmaceutical: Ritalin, Viagra, Testogel. Preciado hints almost at a 'Beauvoir 2.0' for the new biocapitalist era, taking the lessons of her work to the level of the molecular. His despair arises from the realization that the weight of cultural discourse attached to a single molecular substance (oestrogen) can affect one's ability to cry. It is, in this sense, monstrous: gigantic, almost indecipherable. It is through his 'practice' of taking testosterone that he seeks to decipher it, confronting the biocapitalist production of sex and gender. In this particular moment, however, the way in which we 'become' women seems to be unshakeable – the un-becoming Preciado seeks to perform appears impossible.

Preciado administers testosterone for the time it takes to write his book, recording the effects of his 'self-experimentation' in writing (TJ, 297). In many ways Preciado's 'practice' of taking testosterone could be likened to a durational performance: to do so is not to suggest that the experience is not of fundamental importance to Preciado's gender identity, but perhaps better describes the importance Preciado awards performance in his thinking. In his previous work, his Contra-Sexual Manifesto (2000),[vii] dedicated to Monique Wittig, Preciado included instructions to his readers – complete with illustrations, lists of materials, timings – inviting them to perform 'contra-sexual practices' derived from performance art, specifically that of queer artist Ron Athey. He also writes that in the contra-sexual society this text imagines, bodies will be called

‘lesbian bodies or “wittigs”’ playfully acknowledging Wittig’s descriptions of pulling apart the female body and reconstructing or resignifying it through her fictional writing in Le Corps lesbien (1973) (CM, 39).[viii] While on Judith Butler’s reading Wittig attempts in this work to ‘wage war linguistically’ against the ‘semantic and syntactic assault[s]’ of dominant ideology (GT, 153),[ix] Preciado makes his own attempts to resignify bodies by offering a textual incitement for his readers to perform bodily acts, deploying the material body in its own resignification. In short, Preciado asks his readers to perform, to embody radical theory.

Later in Testo Junkie, Preciado turns to the methodologies of feminist art and activism from the 1970s to explore ways of understanding the experience of his body, and of incorporating this body into writing. Preciado first refers to an unnamed piece by Nancy Angelo and Candace Compton of FAW (Feminist Art Workers): ‘Listen to me. I’ve had enough of living locked inside my body. I’m sick of it’ (TJ, 124). Their statement is followed by his own words, referring to his body as a ‘closed box’, a ‘tomb’, or as contained and trapped by his mind: ‘My body is the message, my mind the bottle. Exploding’ (TJ, 124). Just as feminist performers of this period explored what they understood as the ‘trap’ of constructs of femaleness, Preciado echoes their words to explore his experience of transgender embodiment, of feeling closed in by his own experience of the gendered body.

Preciado also draws on performance art of this period to understand his social conditioning as female to attempt to dismantle it:

> Each day I try to cut one of the strings that ties me to the cultural programme of feminisation with which I grew up, but femininity sticks to me lick a greasy hand (…). Like Faith Wilding in her performance at the Womanhouse Project, I keep waiting for

> someone to take me in their arms, waiting for life to begin, waiting for someone to love me, waiting for pleasure, waiting… (TJ, 124)

Preciado here repeats lines from Faith Wilding's performance of Waiting (1972) as part of Womanhouse, curated by Miriam Shapiro and Judy Chicago. Womanhouse took place over three months, housed in a dilapidated LA mansion demolished shortly afterwards. In her performance, Wilding sits patiently, rocking back and forth. Although surrounded by her audience, she meets nobody's gaze, her eyes glazed and staring into the middle distance. She repeats a list of feminine acts of 'waiting' from cradle to grave: 'waiting for someone to feed me (…) waiting to crawl, to walk, waiting to talk (…) waiting to menstruate (…) to be asked to dance (…) waiting for life to begin (…) waiting for my wedding day (...) waiting for him to come home, to fill my time (…) waiting for my baby to stop crying, waiting for some time to myself'.[x] Wilding's performance powerfully conveys the insidious violence, exploitation and destruction wrought on women's lives by the 'cultural programme of feminisation' that repeatedly demands and enforces passivity. Her work could even be described as an illustration of Beauvoirean 'immanence': structured chronologically, spanning the length of a woman's life just as The Second Sex does, describing an enforced interiority, a life closed in on itself.

In the lines cited above, Preciado takes on Wilding's voice, repeating lines from her performance in his text. From this, he moves to a list of masculine 'attributes' he is waiting for, at first innocuous, and later encompassing the most toxic aspects of masculinity:

> But I'm also a trans man. With or without T. To this list of feminine waiting, I have to add an interminable list of hoping for the arrival of masculinity: waiting for my beard to grow, waiting to be able to shave, waiting for a dick to appear beneath my stomach,

> waiting for girls to see me as if I were a man, waiting for men to speak to me as one of their own, waiting to be able to hit all the little pussies, waiting for power, waiting for recognition, waiting for pleasure, waiting… (TJ, 124)

Preciado writes in this moment as a trans man (at other points in the text he asserts his identity as a 'gouine trans' (191) (trans dyke)), firstly waiting for the physical effects of testosterone (e.g. a beard) and to 'pass' as male. The change of verb from 'waiting' to 'hoping' here is notable emphasizing not only his desire, but also the potential for such desires to remain unfulfilled. While masculinity has been understood in direct opposition to passivity (by Beauvoir, for example), Preciado here conveys what he understands as the 'greasy hand' of his social conditioning as female, inseparable from any 'hope' he has for 'masculine' attributes.

If Wilding's performance powerfully demonstrates the worst of feminine passivity, Preciado follows with the worst traits of masculinity, creating his own performance of masculinity – a kind of drag within writing – as he does so often throughout Testo Junkie. Just as Wilding's performance of femininity makes us recoil, so does Preciado's caricature of masculinity, speaking to a mistrust of constructs of binary gender similar to the second-wave desire to dismantle the sex/gender system : 'I don't want any of it'(TJ, 125).

Feminist Trajectories.

> I don't know why we keep falling for the version of the story that says that the homosexual revolution was made by gay men. Let's correct it: the homosexual revolution

> was started by lesbians, effeminate fags, and queens — the only ones who needed it to survive.
>
> (TJ, 131)

When Preciado tells a former editor he wants to write a history of radical lesbian feminism, the transvestite movement and the FHAR in the 70s,[xi] including the 'sausage commando' of the MLF,[xii] he is derided by his editor – a gay man –[xiii] who sees the subject as irrelevant 'tarlouzeries' (TJ, 193-4) (faggot bullshit). Preciado himself does not partake in the stereotyping of the feminism of the 60s, 70s and 80s – generally understood as the period of second-wave feminism – as either too liberal on the one hand, or as dour on the other. These stereotypes are often perpetuated by a 'third wave' of feminism which positioned itself against what had come before. Cathryn Bailey, for instance, critiques the way in which 'second wave feminism is regarded [by writers of the third wave] as a definable phenomenon, as embodying a more or less coherent set of values and ideas which can be recognized and then transcended' (MW, 23), as well as what she sees as third-wave authors' perpetuation of negative stereotypes of feminists in popular media as 'humorless, too angry' (MW, 22).[xiv] In contrast, Preciado describes previous decades' feminism as the 'joyous radicalism of the 70s' and the 'disco glamour of the 80s' (TJ, 285). He refers to feminists of this period as his 'predecessors', but certainly not in a way that renders them dated, irrelevant or redundant (TJ, 295). Indeed, Preciado sees the activism of the 'second wave' MLF in France as spawning the later proto-queer politics of the FHAR – what he terms the 'anal revolution'.[xv] In particular, in 'Anal Terror', his introduction to the 2009 Spanish translation of Guy Hocquenghem's Homosexual Desire, Preciado references the 'sausage commando' mentioned above:

> In France, March 5, 1971, as Professor Lejeune lectured against abortion in the Mutualité de Paris Theater, the writer, left activist, and member of the MLF, Françoise D'Eaubonne, along with a group of lesbians, attacked him, armed with sausages. This is how the "Commando Saucisson" (Sausage Commando) arose. Later, the FHAR (Homosexual Revolutionary Action Front) congealed around it. The Saucisson Commando invented anal terrorism. (AT, 132)[xvi]

At the roots of early queer activism (what Preciado describes in the piece as the 'sexual revolution') Preciado finds the second wave of feminism leading the way, armed with sausages, 'simultaneously ridiculing billy clubs and penises as instruments of traditional politics' (AT, 133). The symbolic aspects of the protest are not lost on Preciado: indeed, the action is interpreted almost as a performance itself.

For Preciado, the roots of queer thinking lie as much in feminist activism as they do in poststructuralist thinking, the two inseparable from one another. The poststructuralist theorists at the roots of queer theory are the inheritors of contemporaneous feminist movements: 'Derrida, Deleuze, Guattari, and Foucault were just as much the inheritors of feminism and the homosexual movements as these movements are the inheritors of the so-called post-structuralist philosophy' (AT, 141); there is a 'theory/practice feedback loop (…) it would be difficult to separate cause from effect' (AT, 140). Queer theory stemmed from activism, from first-hand knowledge of oppression as a minority or marginalized subject: those who 'needed it to survive'.

Preciado does write, however, that such radicalism was 'recuperated by a white, heterosexual, liberal feminism' and notes 'the temporal implication of these political zigzags', slowing down movements and redirecting or relieving the force with which they began (AT,

131). Later in Testo Junkie, this 'mutation of feminism' is explored as a series of 'decentering' movements and 'displacements' from gay and lesbian theorists including Wittig and de Lauretis (TJ, 286). Rendering feminism, consequently, in the plural, he argues that 'dissident feminisms' became more visible at the end of the 80s, produced by subjects excluded from the kind of feminism which took as its subject white, heterosexual and middle-class women (TJ, 286). This 'feminism for monsters' (here Preciado parrots Donna Haraway) diverged from a 'grey, normative and puritan feminism' (TJ, 286). The description Preciado offers is not of feminism as a singular movement, but rather as a series of movements, mutations and dislocations. Ultimately Preciado imagines feminisms emerging from the middle of the 20th Century onwards not as building in a linear progression, as one wave replaced by a second and then a third. The movement he imagines is plural, and far more erratic: a 'political zigzag' changing both in the direction and force of its motion.

Feminist Archives.

Preciado explores the idea of the archive throughout his works, diverging from Derrida's influential account of the archive in offering a conception of a queer, feminist archive formed at an individual and bodily level. Firstly, he writes of 'entire days reviewing archives of American feminism from the 1970s. Some voices will always remain, etched (gravé) in my memory. Others disappear permanently' (TJ, 123). These voices include Faith Ringgold, whose 'way of speaking' (manière de dire) is brought to mind and is stuck in Preciado's memory. Preciado remembers Ringgold's repeated interruption of an interviewer when he speaks, 'not paying him the least attention' (TJ, 123). Radical lesbian feminist Jill Johnston is recalled, her 'voice

imprinted in me' (TJ, 123). Preciado remembers, more than written works, the sound of voices; turns of phrase; verbal interactions. While he perhaps runs the risk of valorizing speech over writing as a bodily presence-to-self of the kind Derrida discusses in Of Grammatology (1967), Preciado's use of the verbs s'imprimer and graver, as well as his reference to archives, lead us to Derrida's later extended essay Archive Fever: a Freudian Impression (1995).

Preciado was a student of Derrida's at the New School for Social Research in New York not long after Archive Fever was written. One particular scene in Testo Junkie might plausibly be read as a performance of archive fever acted out on an individual level. In a restless night fueled by a pharmaceutical high after taking testosterone, as well as frustration at waiting for a love interest to call, Preciado writes of frenzied re-arrangements of his bookshelves filled with various editions and translations of Butler, Haraway and Foucault. He compulsively shuffles the books on his shelves, moving some to his desk and throwing others away (TJ, 89-90). Preciado's work explores Derrida's description of archive fever as an act of forgetting as well as remembering, as well as a kind of restlessness, a (repetition) compulsion – all undeniably bound up with desire and sexual drives. Derrida also writes of inscription into skin, onto the body, through the act of circumcision: 'that singular and immemorial archive called circumcision' (AF, 22).[xvii] In his Manifesto, Preciado describes drawing the signifier of the phallus onto his skin in two of the 'practices' he records (CM, 48, 52). He also describes the body as an 'organic archive' (CM, 25). Later, in Testo Junkie, Preciado writes:

> When we fuck, I feel all of my political history, all my years of feminism move directly to the centre of her body to pool there, as if they found, there upon her skin, their own true beach. When I come, Wittig and Davis, Woolf and Solanas, la Pasionaria and Kate

> Bornstein, simmer [bouilloner] within me. She is covered in my feminism like a fine ejaculation, a shining political ocean. (TJ, 91-2)

Preciado here describes a bodily relation to feminism, bound up with intimacy and sexuality. He uses the verb bouilloner, translated here as 'to simmer', to describe his feminism as a kind of bodily effervescence. Feminism is infused with him through a sexual scene, and he goes as far as to imagine this simmered-down feminism as a bodily fluid – 'a fine ejaculation'. The scene transforms a common trope of mainstream, heteronormative pornography – bukkake (a term derived from the Japanese verb 'to flood') – into a gesture of feminist intimacy. This allusion to pornography, and the sexual nature of the scene in general, is no accident. If Preciado imagines the scene as embodying various and diverse feminist figures spanning over a century from Woolf to Bornstein, he is clear on which side of the 'sex wars' of the 1980s his allegiance lies, representing a turn away from the 'grey, normative and puritan feminism' described earlier. Preciado's political bent is one of subversion, deconstruction and playfulness rather than of absolutes or purism.

The use of liquid vocabulary by Preciado evokes the 'oceanic metaphor' of feminism as a series of successive, numerically distinct 'waves'. On this model of feminism, waves are understood as distinguished firstly by the time period to which they 'belong': the second wave occurring in the 60s-80s; the third announced by Rebecca Walker (daughter of Alice Walker) after articulating her experience of racism and sexism 'Becoming the Third Wave' (1992) for Ms. magazine in the US. Feminist waves are also supposedly distinguishable by distinct theoretical ideas espoused in their name: leading to the association of radical feminism with the second wave, of queer feminism 'displacing' it with the third. For Preciado, queer feminism did

not replace the second wave, but emerged from the same activist energy, the same minority knowledge. Thinkers and activists from three supposedly distinct feminist 'waves' (Woolf, Solanas, Bornstein) find a shared locus through Preciado's body, imagined as simmered down within his body to a singular, bodily fluid. This 'ejaculate' eventually becomes a kind of oceanic spume washed up on the shores of his partner's skin. There is no possible separation between distinguishable 'waves' in the account implied here: feminist thinking flows through his body, irreducibly.

Preciado continues to play with the oceanic metaphor. He describes this effervescent, bodily feminism as finding upon the skin of his partner its 'own true beach' and finishes with the image of 'a shimmering political ocean'. If the 'waves' metaphor has been widely critiqued, it persists, with the apparent advent of a distinct 'fourth wave'. Reformulations have been asserted, including Ednie Kaeh Garrison's twist on the metaphor which reimagines oceanic waves as 'electromagnetic wavelengths' or radio waves, which can exist simultaneously, interfering with one another and implying the intentionality of transmission and communication.[xviii] Preciado retains the oceanic metaphor, but allows his waves to crash together, bubbling, shimmering and coming to rest upon a bodily shore.

Preciado describes in this scene a meeting between bodies, an understanding of feminism inseparable from intimacy, sexuality and human connection. Feminism is 'in his blood', inseparable from his body, permeating it just as testosterone does. Playing with the oceanic metaphor, Preciado offers a dynamic account of ideas coalescing, pooling together and flowing with new and various combinations. Feminist archives are not only engraved in Preciado's memory, but also felt in his body. In fact, his body becomes the arkheion – that which houses an archive (AF, 9).

The formation of an archive is, as well as act of remembering, an act of forgetting bound up with the death drive, whose 'silent vocation is to burn the archive and incite amnesia' (AF, 15). Preciado warns (or fantasises?) of archival destruction:

> Before each and every one of these fragile living archives of feminism and queer culture have been reduced to radioactive ashes, it is necessary to transform this minority knowledge into collective experimentation, into bodily practice, ways of life and of cohabiting. In this context, we are no longer calling, as did our predecessors of the 70s and 80s, for an understanding of history as the production of discourse, but rather for an understanding of discursive production as participants in a wider process of the technical materialisation of life on Earth. (TJ, 295)

Derrida considers the effects of technology on the archive (fax, tape recorders, and above all, email), but only to imagine an expansion of available archival material – a 'retrospective science fiction' of Freud's technological communiqués – rather than the precarity of digital technologies as Preciado does here (AF, 18). Preciado instead sees technology burn the collective archive to the ground, identifying a need to retain knowledge as a 'bodily practice'. And despite differentiating between feminist and queer thinkers of the 70s and 80s and his intention to become a participant in the 'technical materialisation of life on Earth', the way in which he imagines the transformation of minority knowledge into 'collective experimentation, bodily practice' draws heavily on the methodologies developed by feminists of this period through art and activism. To these methodologies, Preciado adds an understanding of biocapitalism, resulting in his molecular performance in Testo Junkie.

A scavenger methodology.

> ‘Monique Wittig with Foucault. Butler with Negri’ (TJ, 111).

Preciado deploys a scavenger methodology: he collects theories, piling them atop one another, resulting in the frenetic, narcotic pace of the text. His archival technique – the way he combines theorists, often feminist theorists – is almost utilitarian: taking what is useful, even from thinkers like Solanas who would seem to be at total odds with his project in Testo Junkie. As someone who identifies at once as a ‘trans dyke’ and a ‘trans man’, a purist account of theory is no more useful than a purist account of identity. Descriptors of identity do not simply coexist or overlap, but melt into one another, flowing together just like the theories he collects.

Ursula K Le Guin claims that linear, heroic narratives are based on an evolution myth: the story of culture ‘originating from and elaborating upon the use of long, hard objects’ (CBTF, 167).[xix] Stories become arrows: ‘the proper shape of the narrative is that of the arrow or spear, starting here and going straight there and THOK! Hitting its mark’ (CBTF, 169). In contrast, Le Guin follows Elizabeth Fisher’s Carrier Bag Theory of evolution, in which she argues that the first tool in human evolution would have been a vessel or container, a tool for gathering. Le Guin’s essay ‘The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction’ (1989) argues for foregrounding the container or vessel in the stories we tell: if a sack, a bag or a gourd may not hold the heroic drama of a spear or an arrow, it is also more human, and more relatable (CBTF, 169). What shape is (feminist) theory; what shape should it be? An arrow or a bag?

Surely there is something distressingly linear, quite brutally evolutionist, about the ‘waves’ account in its willingness to usurp and displace previous generations’ thought wholesale.

While the announcement of a third wave valuably called attention to mainstream feminism's neglect of race and queer issues, transphobia and racism have not been suddenly purged from feminist movements. As in previous decades, certain voices are heard louder than others. Rather than 'shifting the blame' of transphobia and racism onto a previous generation, we must confront them as they manifest in feminist movements today: these are not historic issues, heroically overcome with the advent of a cleansing wave.

Preciado displays a hunger for feminist ideas, consuming even those that repeat straightforwardly transphobic ideas. Solanas's offending remarks, however, are not awarded airtime; this is a different story. Instead, Preciado devours theories that speak to him, allowing them to coalesce in his body, and, finally, uses them to inform the telling of his own story of transgender experience. As he becomes 'the thing to put things in, the container for the thing contained', his story becomes that of a bodily vessel (CBTF, 167). In place of the heroic trajectory of feminist waves, Preciado's feminism finds itself as 'this vast sack, this belly of the universe, this womb of things to be and tomb of things that were, this unending story' (CBTF, 170).

[i] Simply 'un transgenre' in the original French, I have translated this (as does Benderson in his published translation) as 'a transgender body' avoiding the outdated use of 'transgender' as a noun. All translations from this text are my own.

[ii] Beatriz Preciado, Testo Junkie: sexe, drogues et biopolitiques (Paris: Editions Bernard Grasset, 2008). Henceforth "TJ".
[iii] Michel Foucault, The Will to Knowledge: History of Sexuality Volume 1 (London: Prenguin, 1976).
[iv] Valerie Solanas, SCUM Manifesto (London: Phoenix Press, 1991).
[v] See Morgan (1999) for a succinct overview of the historic mistreatment of transsexuality by psychoanalysis. Diane Morgan, 'What Does a Transsexual Want?' in Reclaiming Genders: Transsexual Grammars at the Fin de Siècle (London: Cassell, 1999), 219-239.
[vi] Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York, Vintage Books, 2011). Henceforth "SS".
[vii] This work remains untranslated in English, but is available in French and Spanish.
[viii] Beatriz Preciado, Manifeste contra-sexuel (Paris: Balland, 2000). Henceforth "CM".
[ix] Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (London: Routledge, 1990).
[x] Faith Wilding, Waiting (1972) available to view on the Womanhouse website: www.womanhouse.net
[xi] Front Homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire (Homosexual Revolutionary Action Front).
[xii] Mouvement de Libération des Femmes (Women's Liberation Movement).
[xiii] This editor was the French writer Guillaume Dustan, who is addressed continually throughout Testo Junkie. For more on their relationship, see Elliot Evans, 'Your HIV-positive sperm, my trans-dyke uterus: Anti/futurity and the politics of bareback sex between Guillaume Dustan and Beatriz Preciado', Sexualities 18:1-2 (2015), 127-140.
[xiv] Cathryn Bailey, 'Making Waves and Drawing Lines: The Politics of Defining the Vicissitudes of Feminism', Hypatia 12:3 (1997), 17–28.
[xv] Preciado elaborates elsewhere on anality as an equalizing attribute situated beyond binary metaphors of sexual organs as either phallus or lack, and a practice which one might cultivate: calling on his readers to become 'an asshole and an ass-worker' (CM,30-1).
[xvi] Beatriz Preciado, 'Anal Terror' translated by Bædan, in Bædan 3: Journal of Queer Time Travel (Seattle: Eberhardt Press, 2015), 123-168.
[xvii] Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression', Diacritics 25:2 (1995), 9-63.
[xviii] Ednie Kaeh Garrison, 'Are We on a Wavelength Yet? On Feminist Oceanography, Radios and Third-Wave Feminism', in Different Wavelengths: Studies of the Contemporary Women's Movement, edited by Jo Reger (New York: Routledge, 2005), 312-34.
[xix] Ursula K Le Guin, 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction' in Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places (New York: Grove Press, 1989), 165-170.