



TESTO



JUNKIE



BEATRIZ PRECIADO

**SEX, DRUGS, AND BIOPOLITICS IN
THE PHARMACOPORNOGRAPHIC ERA**

**"Inventive, daring, and blindingly lucid, Beatriz Preciado
opens a new branch of philosophical practice."**

—AVITAL RONELL, author of *CRACK WARS*

"Testo Junkie is a wild ride. Preciado leaves the identity politics of taking T to others, and instead, in the tradition of William S. Burroughs, Kathy Acker, and Jean Genet, s/he conducts a wild textual experiment. The results are spectacular . . . The gendered body will never be the same again."

—JACK HALBERSTAM, author of *THE QUEER ART OF FAILURE*

"Beatriz Preciado's brilliant book oscillates between high theory and the surging rush of testosterone. Flush with elegant theoretical formulations, lascivious sex narratives, and astute histories of gender, *Testo Junkie* is a key text to comprehend the deep interconnectedness of sex and drugs today."

—JOSÉ ESTEBAN MUÑOZ, author of *CRUISING UTOPIA*

"The ideas in Beatriz Preciado's pornosophical gem are a thousand curious fingers slipped beneath the underpants of conventional thinking. Teach the sex scenes in your seminars, and read the flights of theory aloud to your latest lover amid a tangle of sweaty sheets."

—SUSAN STRYKER, author of
THE TRANSGENDER STUDIES READER

"*Testo Junkie* is unlike anything I've ever read. Beatriz Preciado has produced a volume of work that goes far beyond memoir to create an entirely new way of understanding not only the history of sex, gender, and the body, but of life as we have come to know it. Powerful and disturbing in the most pleasurable way."

—DEL LAGRACE VOLCANO, author of
FEMMES OF POWER

"Beatriz Preciado offers an exhilarating and sometimes shattering portrait of how gender shapes the ways we live and fuck and grieve and fight and love. *Testo Junkie* is a fearless chronicle of the gender revolution currently in progress. Anyone who has a gender—or has dispensed with one—should read this book."

—GAYLE SALAMON, author of
ASSUMING A BODY

"Inventive, daring, and blindingly lucid, Beatriz Preciado opens a new branch of philosophical practice. Driven by a flair for technological adventure and the uncommon ability to craft somatic and political fiction, *Testo Junkie* probes the limits of textual trafficking, gender-hacking, and the different regimes of prosthetic imposition that govern our existence. This book is not for the faint of philosophical heart!"

—AVITAL RONELL, author of *CRACK WARS*

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY BRUCE BENDERSON



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For our dead ones: A., T., E., J., K., S., T.

For William

For Virginie, Pepa, and Swann

2. THE PHARMACOPORNOGRAPHIC ERA

I was born in 1970. The automobile industry, which had reached its peak, was beginning to decline. My father had the first and most prominent garage in Burgos, a Gothic city full of parish priests and members of the military, where Franco had set up the new symbolic capital of fascist Spain. If Hitler had won the war, the new Europe would have been established around two obviously unequal poles, Burgos and Berlin. At least, that was the little Galician general's dream.

Garage Central was located on rue du General Mola, named after the soldier who in 1936 led the uprising against the Republican regime. The most expensive cars in the city, belonging to the rich and to dignitaries of the Franco regime, were kept there. In my house there were no books, just cars. Some Chrysler Motor Slant Sixes; several Renault Gordinis, Dauphines, and Ondines (nicknamed "widows' cars," because they had the reputation of skidding on curves and killing husbands at the wheel); some Citroën DSs (which the Spanish called "sharks"); and several Standards brought back from England and reserved for doctors. I should add the collection of antique cars that my father had put together little by little: a black "Lola Flores" Mer-

cedes, a gray, pre-1930s Citroën with a traction engine, a seventeen-horsepower Ford, a Dodge Dart Swinger, a 1928 Citroën with its “frog’s ass,” and a Cadillac with eight cylinders. At the time, my father was investing in brickyard industries, which (like the dictatorship, coincidentally) would begin to decline in 1975 with the gas crisis. In the end, he had to sell his car collection to make up for the collapse of the factory. I cried about it. Meanwhile, I was growing up like a tomboy. My father cried about it.

During that bygone yet not-so-long-ago era that we today call Fordism, the automobile and mass-produced suburban housing industries synthesized and perfected a specific mode of production and consumption, a Taylorist temporal organization of life characterized by a sleek polychrome aesthetic of the inanimate object, a way of conceiving of inner space and urban living, a conflictual arrangement of the body and the machine, a discontinuous flow of desire and resistance. In the years following the energy crisis and the decline of the assembly line, people sought to identify new growth sectors in a transformed global economy. That is when “experts” began talking about biochemical, electronic, computing, or communications industries as new industrial props of capitalism . . . But these discourses won’t be enough to explain the production of added value and the metamorphosis of life in contemporary society.

It is, however, possible to sketch out a new cartography of the transformations in industrial production during the previous century, using as an axis the political and technical management of the body, sex, and identity. In other words,

it is philosophically relevant today to undertake a *somato-political*¹ analysis of “world-economy.”²

From an economic perspective, the transition toward a third form of capitalism, after the slave-dependent and industrial systems, is generally situated somewhere in the 1970s; but the establishment of a new type of “government of the living”³ had already emerged from the urban, physical, psychological, and ecological ruins of World War II—or, in the case of Spain, from the Civil War.

How did sex and sexuality become the main objects of political and economic activity?

Follow me: The changes in capitalism that we are witnessing are characterized not only by the transformation of “gender,” “sex,” “sexuality,” “sexual identity,” and “pleasure” into objects of the political management of living (just as Foucault had suspected in his biopolitical description of new systems of social control), but also by the fact that this management itself is carried out through the new dynamics of advanced technocapitalism, global media, and biotechnologies. During the Cold War, the United States put more money into scientific research about sex and sexuality than any other country in history. The application of surveillance and biotechnologies for governing civil society

1. I refer here to Foucault’s notion “*somato-pouvoir*” and “*technologie politique du corps*.” See Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 33–36; see also Michel Foucault, “*Les rapports de pouvoir passent à l’intérieur du corps*,” in *La Quinzaine Littéraire*, 247 (1er–15 janvier 1977): 4–6.

2. Here I draw on the well-known expression used by Immanuel Wallerstein in *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

3. Michel Foucault, “*Du gouvernement des vivants (1979–1980)*,” *Leçons du Collège de France, 1979–1980*, in *Dits et Ecrits*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 4: 641–42.

started during the late 1930s: the war was the best laboratory for molding the body, sex, and sexuality. The necropolitical techniques of the war will progressively become biopolitical industries for producing and controlling sexual subjectivities. Let us remember that the period between the beginning of World War II and the first years of the Cold War constitutes a moment without precedent for women's visibility in public space as well as the emergence of visible and politicized forms of homosexuality in such unexpected places as, for example, the American army.⁴ Alongside this social development, American McCarthyism—rampant throughout the 1950s—added to the patriotic fight against communism the persecution of homosexuality as a form of antinationalism while at the same time exalting the family values of masculine labor and domestic maternity.⁵ Meanwhile, architects Ray and Charles Eames collaborated with the American army to manufacture small boards of molded plywood to use as splints for mutilated appendages. A few years later, the same material was used to build furniture that came to exemplify the light design of modern American disposable architecture.⁶ During the twentieth century, the “invention” of the biochemical notion of the hormone and the pharmaceutical development of synthetic molecules for commercial uses radically modified traditional definitions of normal and pathological sexual identities. In 1941, the first natural molecules of progesterone and estrogens were

4. Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

5. John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

6. See Beatriz Colomina, *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 29.

obtained from the urine of pregnant mares (Premarin) and soon after synthetic hormones (Norethindrone) were commercialized. The same year, George Henry carried out the first demographic study of “sexual deviation,” a quantitative study of masses known as *Sex Variants*.⁷ The Kinsey Reports on human sexual behavior (1948 and 1953) and Robert Stoller’s protocols for “femininity” and “masculinity” (1968) followed in sexological suit. In 1957, the North American pedo-psychiatrist John Money coined the term “gender,” differentiating it from the traditional term “sex,” to define an individual’s inclusion in a culturally recognized group of “masculine” or “feminine” behavior and physical expression. Money famously affirms that it is possible (using surgical, endocrinological, and cultural techniques) to “change the gender of any baby up to 18 months.”⁸ Between 1946 and 1949 Harold Gillies was performing the first phalloplastic surgeries in the UK, including work on Michael Dillon, the first female-to-male transsexual to have taken testosterone as part of the masculinization protocol.⁹ In 1952, US soldier George W. Jorgensen was transformed into Christine, the first transsexual person discussed widely in the popular press. During the early 50s and into the 60s, physician Harry Benjamin systematized the clinical use of hormonal molecules in the treatment of “sex change” and

7. Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 178–218.

8. John Money, Joan Hampson, and John Hampson, “Imprinting and the Establishment of Gender Role,” *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 77 (1957): 333–36.

9. Harold Gillies and Raph Millard J., *The Principles and Art of Plastic Surgery* (Boston: Little Brown, 1957), 385–88; Michael Dillon, *Self. A Study in Ethics and Endocrinology* (London: Heinemann, 1946); for a larger historical survey see also: Berenice L. Hausman, *Changing Sex, Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 67.

defined “transsexualism,” a term first introduced in 1954, as a curable condition.¹⁰

The invention of the contraceptive pill, the first biochemical technique enabling the separation between heterosexual practice and reproduction, was a direct result of the expansion of endocrinological experimentation, and triggered a process of development of what could be called, twisting the Eisenhower term, “the sex-gender industrial complex.”¹¹ In 1957, Searle & Co. commercialized Enovid, the first contraceptive pill (“the Pill”) made of a combination of mestranol and norethynodrei. First promoted for the treatment of menstrual disorders, the Pill was approved for contraceptive use four years later. The chemical components of the Pill would soon become the most used pharmaceutical molecules in the whole of human history.¹²

The Cold War was also a period of transformation of the governmental and economic regulations concerning pornography and prostitution. In 1946, elderly sex worker and spy Martha Richard convinced the French government to declare the “*maison closes*” illegal, which ended the nineteenth-century governmental system of brothels in France. In 1953, Hugh Hefner founded *Playboy*, the first North American “porn” magazine to be sold at newspaper stands, with a photograph of Marilyn Monroe naked as the

10. Whereas homosexuality was withdrawn from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) in 1973, in 1983, gender identity disorder (clinical form of transsexuality) was included in the DSM with diagnostic criteria for this new pathology.

11. President Eisenhower used the term “military-industrial complex” in his Farewell to the Nation speech of 1961.

12. Andrea Tone, *Devices and Desires. A History of Contraceptives in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 203–31; Lara V. Marks, *Sexual Chemistry: A History of the Contraceptive Pill* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

centerfold of the first publication. In 1959, Hefner transformed an old Chicago house into the Playboy Mansion, which was promoted within the magazine and on television as a “love palace” with thirty-two rooms, becoming soon the most popular American erotic utopia. In 1972, Gerard Damiano produced *Deep Throat*. The film, starring Linda Lovelace, was widely commercialized in the US and became one of the most watched movies of all times, grossing more than \$600 million. From this time on, porn film production boomed, from thirty clandestine film producers in 1950 to over 2,500 films in 1970.

If for years pornography was the dominant visual technology addressed to the male body for controlling his sexual reaction, during the 1950s the pharmaceutical industry looked for ways of triggering erection and sexual response using surgical and chemical prostheses. In 1974, Soviet Victor Konstantinovich Kalnberz patented the first penis implant using polyethylene plastic rods as a treatment for impotency, resulting in a permanently erect penis. These implants were abandoned for chemical variants because they were found to be “physically uncomfortable and emotionally disconcerting.” In 1984 Tom F. Lue, Emil A. Tanaghoy, and Richard A. Schmidt implanted a “sexual pacemaker” in the penis of a patient. The contraption was a system of electrodes inserted close to the prostate that permitted an erection by remote control. The molecule of sildenafil (commercialized as Viagra[®] by Pfizer laboratories in 1988) will later become the chemical treatment for “erectile dysfunction.”

During the Cold War years psychotropic techniques first developed within the military were extended to medical and recreational uses for the civil population. In the 1950s, the United States Central Intelligence Agency performed a series of experiments involving electroshock techniques as well as psychedelic and hallucinogen drugs as part of a program of “brainwashing,” military interrogation, and psychological torture. The aim of the experimental program of the CIA was to identify the chemical techniques able to directly modify the prisoner’s subjectivity, inflecting levels of anxiety, dizziness, agitation, irritability, sexual excitement, or fear.¹³ At the same time, the laboratories Eli Lilly (Indiana) commercialized the molecule called Methadone (the most simple opiate) as an analgesic and Secobarbital, a barbiturate with anaesthetic, sedative, and hypnotic properties conceived for the treatment of epilepsy, insomnia, and as an anaesthetic for short surgery. Secobarbital, better known as “the red pill” or “doll,” became one of the drugs of the rock underground culture of the 1960s.¹⁴ In 1977, the state of Oklahoma introduced the first lethal injection composed of barbiturates similar to “the red pill” to be used for the death penalty.¹⁵

The Cold War military space race was also the site of production of a new form of technological embodiment.

13. On the use of chemicals for military purposes during the Cold War years see: Naomi Klein, “The Torture Lab,” in *The Shock Doctrine* (New York: Penguin, 2007), 25–48.

14. Methadone became in the 70s the basic substitution treatment for heroine addiction. See: Tom Carnwath and Ian Smith, *Heroin Century* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 40–42.

15. The same method had already been applied in a Nazi German program called “Action T4” for “racial hygiene” that euthanatized between 75,000 and 100,000 people with physical or psychic disabilities. It was abandoned because of the high pharmacological cost; instead it was substituted by gas chambers or simply death caused by inanition.

At the start of the 60s, Manfred E. Clynes and Nathan S. Kline used the term “cyborg” for the first time to refer to an organism technologically supplemented to live in an extraterrestrial environment where it could operate as an “integrated homeostatic system.”¹⁶ They experimented with a laboratory rat, which received an osmotic prosthesis implant that it dragged along—a cyber tail. Beyond the rat, the cyborg named a new techno-organic condition, a sort of “soft machine”¹⁷ (to use a Burroughs term) or a body with “electric skin” (to put it in Haus-Rucker & Co. terms) subjected to new forms of political control but also able to develop new forms of resistance. During the 1960s, as part of a military investigation program, *Arpanet* was created; it was the predecessor of the global Internet, the first “net of nets” of interconnected computers capable of transmitting information.

On the other hand, the surgical techniques developed for the treatment of “*les geules cassées*” of the First World War and the skin reconstruction techniques specially invented for the handling of the victims of the nuclear bomb will be transformed during the 1950s and 1960s into cosmetic and sexual surgeries.¹⁸ In response to the threat inferred by Nazism and racist rhetoric, which claims that racial or religious differences can be detected in anatomical signs, “de-circumcision,” the artificial reconstruction of foreskin, was one of the most practiced cosmetic surgery operations

16. M. E. Clynes and N. S. Kline, “Cyborgs and Space,” in *Astronautics* (September, 1960).

17. William S. Burroughs, *The Soft Machine* (New York: Olympia Press, 1961).

18. Martin Monestier, *Les geules cassées, Les médecins de l'impossible 1914-18* (Paris: Cherche Midi, 2009).

in the United States.¹⁹ At the same time, facelifts, as well as various other cosmetic surgery operations, became mass-market techniques for a new middle-class body consumer. Andy Warhol had himself photographed during a facelift, transforming his own body into a bio-pop object.

Meanwhile, the use of a viscous, semi-rigid material that is waterproof, thermally and electrically resistant, produced by artificial propagation of carbon atoms in long chains of molecules of organic compounds derived from petroleum, and whose burning is highly polluting, became generalized in manufacturing the objects of daily life. DuPont, who pioneered the development of plastics from the 1930s on, was also implicated in nuclear research for the Manhattan project.²⁰ Together with plastics, we saw the exponential multiplication of the production of transuranic elements (the chemical elements with atomic numbers greater than 92—the atomic number of Uranium), which became the material to be used in the civil sector, including plutonium, that had, before, been used as nuclear fuel in military operations.²¹ The level of toxicity of transuranic elements exceeds that of any other element on earth, creating a new form of vulnerability for life. Cellulosic, poly-nosic, polyamide, polyester, acrylic, polypylene, spandex, etc., became materials used equally for body consumption and architecture. The mass consumption of plastic defined

19. Sander L. Gilman, "Decircumcision: The First Aesthetic Surgery," *Modern Judaism* 17, 3 (1997): 201–10. Maxell Matz, *Evolution of Plastic Surgery* (New York: Froben Press, 1946), 287–89.

20. Pap A. Ndiaye, *Nylon and Bombs: DuPont and the March of Modern America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2006).

21. See: Donna J. Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan@Meets_OncoMouse™: Feminism and Technoscience*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), 54.

the material conditions of a large-scale ecological transformation that resulted in destruction of other (mostly lower) energy resources, rapid consumption, and high pollution. The *Trash Vortex*, a floating mass the size of Texas in the North Pacific made of plastic garbage, was to become the largest water architecture of the twenty-first century.²²

We are being confronted with a new kind of hot, psychotropic, punk capitalism. Such recent transformations are imposing an ensemble of new microprosthetic mechanisms of control of subjectivity by means of biomolecular and multimedia technical protocols. Our world economy is dependent on the production and circulation of hundreds of tons of synthetic steroids and technically transformed organs, fluids, cells (techno-blood, techno-sperm, techno-ovum, etc.), on the global diffusion of a flood of pornographic images, on the elaboration and distribution of new varieties of legal and illegal synthetic psychotropic drugs (e.g., bromazepam, Special K, Viagra, speed, crystal, Prozac, ecstasy, poppers, heroin), on the flood of signs and circuits of the digital transmission of information, on the extension of a form of diffuse urban architecture to the entire planet in which megacities of misery are knotted into high concentrations of sex-capital.²³

These are just some snapshots of a postindustrial, global, and mediatic regime that, from here on, I will call *pharmacopornographic*. The term refers to the processes of a biomolecular (pharmaco) and semiotic-technical (porno-

22. Susan Freinkel, *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).

23. See Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums," *New Left Review* 26 (April–March 2004).

graphic) government of sexual subjectivity—of which “the Pill” and *Playboy* are two paradigmatic offspring. Although their lines of force may be rooted in the scientific and colonial society of the nineteenth century, their economic vectors become visible only at the end of World War II. Hidden at first under the guise of a Fordist economy, they reveal themselves in the 1970s with the gradual collapse of this phenomenon.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the mechanisms of the pharmacopornographic regime are materialized in the fields of psychology, sexology, and endocrinology. If science has reached the hegemonic place that it occupies as a discourse and as a practice in our culture, it is because, as Ian Hacking, Steve Woolgar, and Bruno Latour have noticed, it works as a material-discursive apparatus of bodily production.²⁴ Technoscience has established its material authority by transforming the concepts of the psyche, libido, consciousness, femininity and masculinity, heterosexuality and homosexuality, intersexuality and transsexuality into tangible realities. They are manifest in commercial chemical substances and molecules, biotype bodies, and fungible technological goods managed by multinationals. The success of contemporary technoscientific industry consists in transforming our depression into Prozac, our masculinity into testosterone, our erection into Viagra, our fertility/sterility into the Pill, our AIDS into tritherapy, without knowing which comes first: our

24. Ian Hacking, *Representing and Intervening: Introductory Topics in the Philosophy of Natural Science* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, *La vie de laboratoire: La production des faits scientifiques* (Paris: La Découverte, 1979).

depression or Prozac, Viagra or an erection, testosterone or masculinity, the Pill or maternity, tritherapy or AIDS. This performative feedback is one of the mechanisms of the pharmacopornographic regime.

Contemporary society is inhabited by toxic-pornographic subjectivities: subjectivities defined by the substance (or substances) that supply their metabolism, by the cybernetic prostheses and various types of pharmacopornographic desires that feed the subject's actions and through which they turn into agents. So we will speak of Prozac subjects, cannabis subjects, cocaine subjects, alcohol subjects, Ritalin subjects, cortisone subjects, silicone subjects, heterovaginal subjects, double-penetration subjects, Viagra subjects, \$ subjects . . .

There is nothing to discover in nature; there is no hidden secret. We live in a punk hypermodernity: it is no longer about discovering the hidden truth in nature; it is about the necessity to specify the cultural, political, and technological processes through which the body as artifact acquires natural status. The oncomouse,²⁵ the laboratory mouse biotechnologically designed to carry a carcinogenic gene, eats Heidegger. Buffy kills the vampire of Simone de Beauvoir. The dildo, a synthetic extension of sex to produce pleasure and identity, eats Rocco Siffredi's cock. There is nothing to discover in sex or in sexual identity; there is no *inside*. The truth about sex is not a disclosure; it is *sexdesign*. Pharmacopornographic biocapitalism does not produce *things*.

25. See Donna J. Haraway, "When Man™ is on the Menu," in *Incorporations*(Zone 6), eds. Jonathan Crary and Sanford K. Winter (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 38–43.

It produces mobile ideas, living organs, symbols, desires, chemical reactions, and conditions of the soul. In biotechnology and in pornocommunication there is no object to be produced. The pharmacopornographic business is the *invention of a subject* and then its global reproduction.

MASTURBATORY COOPERATION

The theoreticians of post-Fordism (Virno, Hardt, Negri, Corsani, Marazzi, Moulier-Boutang, etc.) have made it clear that the productive process of contemporary capitalism takes its raw material from knowledge, information, communication, and social relationships.²⁶ According to the most recent economic theory, the mainspring of production is no longer situated in companies but is “in society as a whole, the quality of the population, cooperation, conventions, training, forms of organization that hybridize the market, the firm and society.”²⁷ Negri and Hardt refer to “biopolitical production,” using Foucault’s cult notion, or to “cognitive capitalism” to enumerate today’s complex forms of capitalist production that mask the “production of symbols, language, information,” as well as the “production of

26. Some of the most influential analyses of the current transformations of industrial society and capitalism relevant to my own work are the following: Maurizio Lazzarato, “*Le concept de travail immatériel: la grande entreprise*,” *Futur Antérieur* 10 (1992); Antonella Corsani, “*Vers un renouveau de l’économie politique: anciens concepts et innovation théorique*,” *Multitudes* 2 (printemps 2000); Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude: guerre et démocratie à l’âge de l’empire* (Paris: La Découverte, 2006); Yann Moulier-Boutang, *Le capitalisme cognitif: La nouvelle grande transformation* (Paris: Editions Amsterdam, 2007).

27. Yann Moulier-Boutang, “*Eclats d’économie et bruits de lutte*,” *Multitudes* 2 (Mai 200): 7. See also Antonella Corsani, “*Vers un renouveau de l’économie politique*.”

affects.”²⁸ They call “biopolitical work” the forms of production that are linked to aids provided to the body, to care, to the protection of the other and to the creation of human relations, to the “feminine” work of reproduction,²⁹ to relationships of communication and exchange of knowledge and affects. But most often, analysis and description of this new form of production stops biopolitically at the belt.³⁰

What if, in reality, the insatiable bodies of the multitude—their cocks, clitorises, anuses, hormones, and neurosexual synapses—what if desire, excitement, sexuality, seduction, and the pleasure of the multitude were all the mainsprings of the creation of value added to the contemporary economy? And what if cooperation were a *masturbatory cooperation* and not the simple cooperation of brains?

The pornographic industry is currently the great mainspring of our cybereconomy; there are more than a million and a half sites available to adults at any point on the planet. Sixteen billion dollars is generated annually by the sex industry, a large part of it belonging to the porn portals of the Internet. Each day, 350 new portals allow virtual access to an exponentially increasing number of users. If

28. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude: guerre et démocratie à l'âge de l'empire* (Paris: Editions 10–18, DL, 2006), 135.

29. Ibid., 137. Cristian Marazzi, *The Violence of Financial Capitalism*, trans. Kristina Lebedeva and Jason Francis McGimsey (New York: Semiotext(e), 2011), op. cit.

30. Several trajectories in this direction come from the reflections in *Precarias a la Deriva*, by Anne Querrien and Antonella Corsani. See *Precarias a la Deriva, A la deriva por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2004); Antonella Corsani, “*Quelles sont les conditions nécessaires pour l'émergence de multiples récits du monde? Penser le revenu garanti à travers l'histoire des luttes des femmes et de la théorie féministe*,” *Multitudes* 27 (hiver 2007); Antonella Corsani, “Beyond the Myth of Woman: The Becoming-Transfeminist of (Post-)Marxism,” trans. Timothy S. Murphy, *SubStance* #112: *Italian Post-Workerist Thought* 36, no. 1, (2007): 106–38; and Linda McDowell, “Life without Father and Ford: The New Gender Order of Post-Fordism,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, no. 4 (1991): 400–19.

it's true that the majority of these sites belong to the multinationals (Playboy, Hotvideo, Dorcel, Hustler . . .), the amateur portals are what constitute the truly emerging market for Internet porn. When Jennifer Kaye Ringley had the initiative in 1996 to install several webcams throughout her home that broadcast real-time videos of her daily life through her Internet portal, the model of the single transmitter was supplanted. In documentary style, JenniCams produce an audiovisual chronicle of sex lives and are paid for by subscription, similar to the way some TV stations operate. Today, any user of the Internet who has a body, a computer, a video camera, or a webcam, as well as an Internet connection and a bank account, can create a porn site and have access to the cybermarket of the sex industry. The autophornographic body has suddenly emerged as a new force in the world economy. The recent access of relatively impoverished populations all over the planet to the technical means of producing cyberpornography has, for the first time, sabotaged a monopoly that was until now controlled by the big multinationals of porn. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the first people able to make use of this market were sex workers from the former Soviet bloc, then those in China, Africa, and India. Confronted with such autonomous strategies on the part of sex workers, the multinationals of porn have gradually united with advertising companies, hoping to attract cybervisitors by offering free access to their pages.

The sex industry is not only the most profitable market on the Internet; it's also the model of maximum profitability for the global cybernetic market (comparable only

to financial speculation): minimum investment, direct sales of the product in real time in a unique fashion, the production of instant satisfaction for the consumer. Every Internet portal is modeled on and organized according to this masturbatory logic of pornographic consumption. If the financial analysts who direct Google, eBay, or Facebook are attentively following the fluctuations of the cyberporn market, it's because the sex industry furnishes an economic model of the cybernetic market as a whole.

If we consider that the pharmaceutical industry (which includes the legal extension of the scientific, medical, and cosmetic industries, as well as the trafficking of drugs declared illegal), the pornography industry, and the industry of war are the load-bearing sectors of post-Fordist capitalism, we ought to be able to give a cruder name to *immaterial labor*. Let us dare, then, to make the following hypothesis: the raw materials of today's production process are excitation, erection, ejaculation, and pleasure and feelings of self-satisfaction, omnipotent control, and total destruction. The real stake of capitalism today is the pharmacopornographic control of subjectivity, whose products are serotonin, techno-blood and blood products, testosterone, antacids, cortisone, techno-sperm, antibiotics, estradiol, techno-milk, alcohol and tobacco, morphine, insulin, cocaine, living human eggs, citrate of sildenafil (Viagra), and the entire material and virtual complex participating in the production of mental and psychosomatic states of excitation, relaxation, and discharge, as well as those of omnipotence and total control. In these conditions, money itself becomes an abstract, signifying psychotropic substance.

Sex is the corollary of capitalism and war, the mirror of production. The dependent and sexual body and sex and all its semiotecnical derivations are henceforth the principal resource of post-Fordist capitalism.

Although the era dominated by the economy of the automobile has been named “Fordism,” let us call this new economy *pharmacopornism*, dominated as it is by the industry of the pill, the masturbatory logic of pornography, and the chain of excitation-frustration on which it is based. The pharmacopornographic industry is white and viscous gold, the crystalline powder of biopolitical capitalism.

Negri and Hardt, in rereading Marx, have shown that “in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the global economy is characterized by the hegemony of industrial labor, even if, in quantitative terms, the latter remains minor in comparison to other forms of production such as agriculture.”³¹ Industrial labor was hegemonic by virtue of the powers of transformation it exerted over any other form of production.

Pharmacopornographic production is characteristic today of a new age of political world economy, not by its quantitative supremacy, but because the control, production, and intensification of narcosexual affects have become the model of all other forms of production. In this way, pharmacopornographic control infiltrates and dominates the entire flow of capital, from agrarian biotechnology to high-tech industries of communication.

In this period of the body’s technomanagement, the

31. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude* (Paris: Editions 10–18, DL, 2006), 133–34.

pharmacopornographic industry synthesizes and defines a specific mode of production and consumption, a masturbatory temporization of life, a virtual and hallucinogenic aesthetic of the living object, an architecture that transforms inner space into exteriority and the city into interiority and “junkspace”³² by means of mechanisms of immediate auto-surveillance and ultrarapid diffusion of information, a continuous mode of desiring and resisting, of consuming and destroying, of evolution and self-destruction.

POTENTIA GAUDENDI

To understand how and why sexuality and the body, the excitable body, at the end of the nineteenth century raided the heart of political action and became the objects of a minute governmental and industrial management, we must first elaborate a new philosophical concept in the pharmacopornographic domain that is equivalent to the force of work in the domain of classical economics. I call *potentia gaudendi*, or “orgasmic force,” the (real or virtual) strength of a body’s (total) excitation.³³ This strength is of indeterminate capacity; it has no gender; it is neither male nor female, neither human nor animal, neither animated nor inanimate. Its orientation emphasizes neither the fem-

32. For an elaboration of this idea, see Rem Koolhaas, “Junkspace,” *October* 100 (Spring, 2002): 175–90.

33. My work here begins with the notion of “power of action or force of existing” elaborated by Spinoza and derived from the Greek idea of *dynamis* and its correlations in scholastic metaphysics; cf. Baruch Spinoza, *Éthique*, trans. Bernard Pautrat (Paris: Le Seuil, 1988); Gilles Deleuze, “Spinoza” (lecture, Université de Vincennes à Saint Denis, Université Paris 8, Paris, February 2, 1980).

inine nor the masculine and creates no boundary between heterosexuality and homosexuality or between object and subject; neither does it know the difference between being excited, being exciting, or being-excited-with. It favors no organ over any other, so that the penis possesses no more orgasmic force than the vagina, the eye, or the toe. Orgasmic force is the sum of the potential for excitation inherent in every material molecule. Orgasmic force is not seeking any immediate resolution, and it aspires only to its own extension in space and time, toward everything and everyone, in every place and at every moment. It is a force of transformation for the world in pleasure—"in pleasure with." *Potentia gaudendi* unites all material, somatic, and psychic forces and seeks all biochemical resources and all the structures of the mind.

In pharmacopornographic capitalism, the force of work reveals its actual substratum: orgasmic force, or *potentia gaudendi*. Current capitalism tries to put to work the *potentia gaudendi* in whatever form in which it exists, whether this be in its pharmacological form (a consumable molecule and material agency that will operate within the body of the person who is digesting it), as a pornographic representation (a semiototechnical sign that can be converted into numeric data or transferred into digital, televisual, or telephonic media), or as a sexual service (a live pharmacopornographic entity whose orgasmic force and emotional volume are put in service to a consumer during a specified time, according to a more or less formal contract of sale of sexual services).

Potentia gaudendi is characterized not only by its impermanence and great malleability, but also and above all by the impossibility of possessing and retaining it. *Potentia gaudendi*, as the fundamental energetics of pharmacopornism, does not allow itself to be reified or transformed into private property. I can neither possess nor retain another's *potentia gaudendi*, but neither can one possess or retain what seems to be one's own. *Potentia gaudendi* exists exclusively as an event, a relation, a practice, or an evolutionary process.

Orgasmic force is both the most abstract and the most material of all workforces. It is inextricably carnal and digital, viscous yet representational by numerical values, a phantasmatic or molecular wonder that can be transformed into capital.

The living pansexual body is the *bioport* of the orgasmic force. Thus, it cannot be reduced to a prediscursive organism; its limits do not coincide with the skin capsule that surrounds it. This life cannot be understood as a biological given; it does not exist outside the interlacing of production and culture that belongs to technoscience. This body is a technoliving, multiconnected entity incorporating technology.³⁴ Neither an organism nor a machine, but “the fluid, dispersed, networking techno-organic-textual-mythic system.”³⁵ This new condition of the body blurs the traditional modern distinction between art, performance,

34. Haraway, *Modest_Witness*.

35. Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 219.

media, design, and architecture. The new pharmacological and surgical techniques set in motion tectonic construction processes that combine figurative representations derived from cinema and from architecture (editing, 3-D modeling, 3-D printing, etc.), according to which the organs, the vessels, the fluids (techno-blood, techno-sperm, etc.), and the molecules are converted into the prime material from which our pharmacopornographic corporality is manufactured. Technobodies are either not-yet-alive or already-dead: we are half fetuses, half zombies. Thus, every politics of resistance is a monster politics. Marshall McLuhan, Buckminster Fuller, and Norbert Wiener had an intuition about it in the 1950s: the technologies of communication function like an extension of the body. Today, the situation seems a lot more complex—the individual body functions like an extension of global technologies of communication. “Embodiment is significant prosthesis.”³⁶ To borrow the terms of the American feminist Donna J. Haraway, the twenty-first-century body is a technoliving system, the result of an irreversible implosion of modern binaries (female/male, animal/human, nature/culture). Even the term *life* has become archaic for identifying the actors in this new technology. For Foucault’s notion of “biopower,” Donna J. Haraway has substituted “techno-biopower.” It’s no longer a question of power over life, of the power to manage and maximize life, as Foucault wanted, but of power and control exerted over a technoliving and connected whole.³⁷

36. Ibid., 195.

37. Ibid., 204–30.

In the circuit in which excitation is technoproduced, there are neither living bodies nor dead bodies, but present or missing, actual or virtual connectors. Images, viruses, computer programs, techno-organic fluids, Net surfers, electronic voices that answer phone sex lines, drugs and living dead animals in the laboratory on which they are tested, frozen embryos, mother cells, active alkaloid molecules . . . display no value in the current global economy as being “alive” or “dead,” but only to the extent that they can or can’t be integrated into a bioelectronics of global excitation. Haraway reminds us that “cyborg figures—such as the end-of-the-millennium seed, chip gene, database, bomb, fetus, race, brain, and ecosystem—are the offspring of implosions of subjects and objects and of the natural and artificial.”³⁸ Every technobody, including a dead technobody, can unleash orgasmic force, thus becoming a carrier of the power of production of sexual capital. The force that lets itself be converted into capital lies neither in *bios* nor in *soma*, in the way that they have been conceived from Aristotle to Darwin, but in *techno-eros*, the technoliving enchanted body and its *potentia gaudendi*. And from this it follows that biopolitics (the politics of the control and production of life) as well as necropolitics (the politics of the control and production of death) function as pharmacoporno politics, as planetary managements of *potentia gaudendi*.

Sex, the so-called sexual organs, pleasure and impotence, joy and horror are moved to the center of technopolitical management as soon as the possibility of drawing

38. Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, 12.

profit from orgasmic force comes into play. If the theorists of post-Fordism were interested in immaterial work, in cognitive work, in “non-objectifiable work,”³⁹ in “affective work,”⁴⁰ we theorists of pharmacopornographic capitalism are interested in sexual work as a process of subjectivization, in the possibility of making the subject an inexhaustible supply of planetary ejaculation that can be transformed into abstraction and digital data—into capital.

This theory of “orgasmic force” should not be read through a Hegelian paranoid or Rousseauist utopian/dystopian prism; the market isn’t an outside power coming to expropriate, repress, or control the sexual instincts of the individual. On the other hand, we are being confronted by the most depraved of political situations: the body isn’t aware of its *potentia gaudendi* as long as it does not put it to work.

Orgasmic force in its role as the workforce finds itself progressively regulated by a strict technobiopolitical control. The sexual body is the product of a sexual division of flesh according to which each organ is defined by its function. A sexuality always implies a precise governing of the mouth, hand, anus, vagina. Until recently, the relationship between buying/selling and dependence that united the capitalist to the worker also governed the relationship between the genders, which was conceived as a relationship between the ejaculator and the facilitator of ejaculation. Femininity, far from being nature, is the quality of the

39. Paolo Virno, “La multitude comme subjectivité,” in *Grammaire de la multitude: pour une analyse des formes de vie contemporaines* (Paris: Éditions de l’éclat, 2002), 78–121.

40. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitudes*, 134.

orgasmic force when it can be converted into merchandise, into an object of economic exchange, into work. Obviously, a male body can occupy (and in fact already does occupy) a position of female gender in the market of sex work and, as a result, see its orgasmic power reduced to a capacity for work.

The control of orgasmic power (*puissance*) not only defines the difference between genders, the female/male dichotomy, it also governs, in a more general way, the technobiopolitical difference between heterosexuality and homosexuality. The technical restriction of masturbation and the invention of homosexuality as a pathology are of a pair with the composition of a disciplinary regime at the heart of which the collective orgasmic force is put to work as a function of the heterosexual reproduction of the species. Heterosexuality must be understood as a politically assisted procreation technology. But after the 1940s, the molecularized sexual body was introduced into the machinery of capital and forced to mutate its forms of production. Biopolitical conditions change drastically when it becomes possible to derive benefits from masturbation through the mechanism of pornography and the employment of techniques for the control of sexual reproduction by means of contraceptives and artificial insemination.

If we agree with Marx that “workforce is not actual work carried out but the simple potential or ability for work,” then it must be said that every human or animal, real or virtual, female or male body possesses this masturbatory potentiality, a *potentia gaudendi*, the power to produce molecular joy, and therefore also possesses productive

power without being consumed and depleted in the process. Until now, we've been aware of the direct relationship between the pornification of the body and the level of oppression. Throughout history, the most pornified bodies have been those of non-human animals, women and children, the racialized bodies of the slave, the bodies of young workers and the homosexual body. But there is no ontological relationship between anatomy and *potentia gaudendi*. The credit goes to the French writer Michel Houellebecq for having understood how to build a dystopian fable about this new capacity of global capitalism, which has manufactured the megaslut and the megaletch. The new hegemonic subject is a body (often codified as male, white, and heterosexual) supplemented pharmacopornographically (by Viagra, coke, pornography) and a consumer of pauperized sexual services (often in bodies codified as female, childlike, or racialized):

"When he can, a westerner *works*; he often finds his work frustrating or boring, but he pretends to find it interesting: this much is obvious. At the age of fifty, weary of teaching, of math, of everything, I decided to see the world. I had just been divorced for the third time; as far as sex was concerned, I wasn't expecting much. My first trip was to Thailand, and immediately after that I left for Madagascar. I haven't fucked a white woman since. I've never even felt the desire to do so. Believe me," he added, placing a firm hand on Lionel's forearm, "you won't find a white woman with a soft, submissive, supple, muscular pussy anymore. That's all gone now."⁴¹

41. Michel Houellebecq, *Platform*, trans. Frank Wynne (New York: Random House, 2002), 80.

Power is located not only in the (“female,” “childlike,” or “nonwhite”) body as a space traditionally imagined as pre-discursive and natural, but also in the collection of representations that render it sexual and desirable. In every case it remains a body that is always pharmacopornographic, a technoliving system that is the effect of a widespread cultural mechanism of representation and production.

The goal of contemporary critical theory would be to unravel our condition as pharmacopornographic workers/consumers. If the current theory of the *feminization of labor* omits the *cum shot*, conceals videographic ejaculation behind the screen of cooperative communication, it’s because, unlike Houellebecq, the philosophers of biopolitics prefer not to reveal their position as customers of the global pharmacopornomarket.

In the first volume of *Homo Sacer*, Giorgio Agamben reclaims Walter Benjamin’s concept of the “naked life” in order to define the biopolitical status of the subject after Auschwitz, a subject whose paradigm would be the concentration camp prisoner or the illegal immigrant held in a temporary detention center, reduced to existing only physically and stripped of all legal status or citizenship. To such a notion of the “naked life,” we could add that of the pharmacopornographic life, or *naked technolife*; the distinctive feature of a body stripped of all legal or political status is that its use is intended as a source of production of *potentia gaudendi*. The distinctive feature of a body reduced to naked technolife, in both democratic societies and fascist regimes, is precisely the power to be the object of maximum pharmacopornographic exploitation. Identical codes

of pornographic representation function in the images of the prisoners of Abu Ghraib,⁴² the eroticized images of Thai adolescents, advertisements for L'Oréal and McDonald's, and the pages of *Hot magazine*. All these bodies are already functioning, in an inexhaustible manner, as carnal and digital sources of ejaculatory capital. For the Aristotelian distinction between *zōē* and *bios*, between animal life deprived of any intentionality and "exalted" life, that is, life gifted with meaning and self-determination that is a substrate of biopolitical government, we must today substitute the distinction between *raw* and *biotech* (biotechnoculturally produced); and the latter term refers to the condition of life in the pharmacopornographic era. Biotechnological reality deprived of all civic context (the body of the migrant, the deported, the colonized, the porn actress/actor, the sex worker, the laboratory animal, etc.) becomes that of the *corpus* (and no longer that of *homo*) *pornographicus* whose life (a technical condition rather than a purely biological one), lacking any right to citizenship, authorship, and right to work, is composed by and subject to self-surveillance and global mediatization. No need to resort to the dystopian model of the concentration or extermination camp—which are easy to denounce as mechanisms of control—in order to discover naked technolife, because it's at the center of postindustrial democracies, forming part of a global, integrated multimedia laboratory-brothel, where the control of the flow of affect begins under the pop form of excitation-frustration.

42. See Judith Butler, "Torture and Ethics of Photography," in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25, no. 6 (April 19, 2007): 951–66.

EXCITE AND CONTROL

The gradual transformation of sexual cooperation into a principal productive force cannot be accomplished without the technical control of reproduction. There's no porn without the Pill or without Viagra. Inversely, there is no Viagra or Pill without porn. The new kind of sexual production implies a detailed and strict control of the forces of reproduction of the species. There is no pornography without a parallel surveillance and control of the body's affects and fluids. Acting on this pharmacoporno body are the forces of the reproduction industry, entailing control of the production of eggs, techniques of programming relationships, straw collections of sperm, in vitro fertilization, artificial insemination, the monitoring of pregnancy, the technical planning of childbirth, and so on. Consequently, the sexual division of traditional work gradually disintegrates. Pharmacopornographic capitalism is ushering in a new era in which the most interesting kind of commerce is the production of the species as species, the production of its mind and its body, its desires and its affects. Contemporary biocapitalism at the same time produces and destroys the species. Although we're accustomed to speaking of a society of consumption, the objects of consumption are only the scintilla of a psychotoxic virtual production. We are consumers of air, dreams, identity, relation, things of the mind. This pharmacopornographic capitalism functions in reality thanks to the biomediatric management of subjectivity, through molecular control and the production of virtual audiovisual connections.

The pharmaceutical and audiovisual digital industry are the two pillars on which contemporary biocapitalism relies; they are the two tentacles of a gigantic, viscous built-in circuit. The pharmacoporno program of the second half of the twentieth century is this: control the sexuality of those bodies codified as woman and cause the ejaculation of those bodies codified as men. The Pill, Prozac, and Viagra are to the pharmaceutical industry what pornography, with its grammar of blowjobs, penetrations, and cum shots, is to the industry of culture: the jackpot of postindustrial biocapitalism.

Within the context of biocapitalism, an illness is the conclusion of a medical and pharmaceutical model, the result of a technical and institutional medium that is capable of explaining it discursively, of realizing it and of treating it in a manner that is more or less operational. From a pharmacopornopolitical point of view, a third of the African population infected with HIV *isn't really sick*. The thousands of seropositive people who die each day on the continent of Africa are precarious bodies whose survival has *not yet* been capitalized as bioconsumers/producers by the Western pharmaceutical industry. For the pharmacopornographic system, these bodies are *neither dead nor* living. They are in a prepharmacopornographic state or their life isn't likely to produce an ejaculatory benefit, which amounts to the same thing. They are bodies excluded from the technobiopolitical regime. The emerging pharmaceutical industries of India, Brazil, or Thailand are fiercely fighting for the right to distribute their antiretrovirus therapies. Similarly, if we are still waiting for the commercialization of a vaccine for

malaria (a disease that was causing five million deaths a year on the continent of Africa), it is partly because the countries that need it can't pay for it. The same Western multinational companies that are launching costly programs for the production of Viagra or new treatments for prostate cancer would never invest in malaria. If we do not take into account calculations about pharmacopornographic profitability, it becomes obvious that erectile dysfunction and prostate cancer are not at all priorities in countries where life expectancies for human bodies stricken by tuberculosis, malaria, and AIDS don't exceed the age of fifty-five.⁴³

In the context of pharmacopornographic capitalism, sexual desire and illness are produced and cultivated on the same basis: without the technical, pharmaceutical, and mediatic supports capable of materializing them, they don't exist.

We are living in a toxopornographic era. The postmodern body is becoming collectively desirable through its pharmacological management and audiovisual advancement: two sectors in which the United States holds—for the moment but, perhaps not for long—worldwide hegemony. These two forces for the creation of capital are dependent not on an economy of production, but on an *economy of invention*. As Philippe Pignare has pointed out, "The pharmaceutical industry is one of the economic sectors where the cost of research and development is very high, whereas the manufacturing costs are extremely low. Unlike in the automobile industry, nothing is easier than reproducing a drug and

43. Michael Kremer and Christopher M. Snyder, "Why Is There No AIDS Vaccine?" (Research Paper, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, June 2006).

guaranteeing its chemical synthesis on a massive scale, but nothing is more difficult or more costly than inventing it.”⁴⁴ In the same way, nothing costs less, materially speaking, than filming a blowjob or vaginal or anal penetration with a video camera. Drugs, like orgasms and books, are relatively easy and inexpensive to fabricate. The difficulty resides in their conception and political dissemination.⁴⁵ Pharmacopornographic biocapitalism does not produce things. It produces movable ideas, living organs, symbols, desires, chemical reactions, and affects. In the fields of biotechnology and pornocommunication, there are no objects to produce; it’s a matter of *inventing* a subject and producing it on a global scale.

44. Philippe Pignarre, *Le grand secret de l'industrie pharmaceutique* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004), 18.

45. Maurizio Lazzarato, *Puissance de l'invention: La Psychologie économique de Gabriel Tarde contre l'économie politique* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de Penser en Rond, 2002).