

The Laurence Rassel Show

THE POST-FEMINIST RADIO DRAMA
ASSASSINATED BEFORE BROADCAST

... starring Laurence Rassel & Terre Thaemlitz

*"Feminist anonymity,
transgendered authorship ...
and murder."*



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CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Aiko Tsuji as the Announcer and Terre Thaemlitz
Terre Thaemlitz as self
Laurence Rassel as self
Marie-Françoise Stewart as Joan Smith
Nicolas Malevé as self and Roland Barthes
Tina Horne as Peggy Phelan
Pierre De Jaeger as Michel Foucault
Femke Snelting as Michel de Certeau
Wendy Van Wynsberghe as Virginia Woolf

... and the found-source players

Written by: Laurence Rassel & Terre Thaemlitz

Audio by: Terre Thaemlitz

Transcript

KEY: TEXT IN ITALICS INDICATES FOUND SOUND SOURCES

1. Previously on “The Laurence Rassel Show” . . .

ANNOUNCER: At the tone, please begin recording the following program with the intent of illegal distribution.

MALE ANNOUNCER: *Burn it, play it. Burn it, play it. Burn it, play it. Burn it, play it.*

ANNOUNCER: Previously on “The Laurence Rassel Show”....

TERRE: Come on... nudity is necessary for the story. It reveals your true character.

LAURENCE: In my story, I was Johnny, the ten-year-old son of a Presbyterian minister, and I didn't take off my shirt in two hundred pages.

TERRE: So I made a few changes.

LAURENCE: Mr. Thaemlitz, I don't want to carp, but quite honestly you are changing my simple little story into something unforgivably crass.

TERRE: No, I'm turning your dull little story into an all-time hit drama.

LAURENCE: But surely that's why you bought it, because it was to be a best seller.

TERRE: Wrong. I bought it for the title.

LAURENCE: I see. Well, it so happens that my name and my reputation are attached to that title. Now, I don't want to seem disagreeable, but I do believe that I have a right to protect my interests.

TERRE: Wrong again. I bought your rights. You can't stop me from doing whatever I want to your story.

LAURENCE: Just because the Almighty gave people a taste for lobsters, it doesn't mean he gave lobsters a taste for being boiled alive. I'm sorry Mr. Thaemlitz, but I'm going to do whatever I have to do to stop this radio drama from being made.

2. Opening theme and introduction

(THEME MUSIC PLAYS)

TERRE: Hello, I'm Terre Thaemlitz. You may know me from such albums as “Means from and End” or “Lovebomb,” or simply think of me as that Queer Transgendered producer of electroacoustic music. Remember that piano solo album of Kraftwerk songs? That was mine...

In May of 2001, I was brought to lecture and perform in Belgium by Constant, an organization employing critical works, interventions, texts, and new media to promote

awareness around such issues as feminism, gender and author rights. It was there that I first met the director of Constant, Laurence Rassel - one of Belgium's first and most prominent Cyberfeminists. Oh, don't bother Googling her name - you won't find anything. You see, Laurence spent the bulk of her career **operating anonymously** whenever possible, **as a critical rejection of systems of authorship**, which socially - and legally - **are inseparable from the troubles of patriarchy**. At the same time, Laurence is skeptical of notions of “active invisibility,” knowing that there's a fine line between those invisibilities we choose and those which are imposed upon us.

In September 2004, we met again in Spain, where we were both giving discussions about gender issues at Arteleku Art Center. It was then and there we began planning a collaboration that would combine our various approaches toward identity construction... and murder.

Between the **death of her invisibility**, a **feminist assassination of the patriarchal Author figure**, and that same Author figure's repeated attempts at suicide through modern philosophy since the 1960's, “The Laurence Rassel Show” is guaranteed to be an action packed program of gender, sex and violence.

But hey, enough of my yackin! Let the mayhem begin!

(GUNSHOTS)

SCREAMS: *Catch that killer! Stop him, he's a murderer! Stop him! Murder! Catch that killer!*

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *Sure it was stupid, but I panicked! All I could see was my picture on page one, getting busted in a dress! Great!*

3. A special message from Joan Smith (FROM “MORALITIES: SEX, MONEY AND POWER IN THE 21ST CENTURY”)

ANNOUNCER: And now, a special message from Joan Smith.

JOAN SMITH: The **18th century** was, par excellence, the age of privatization. Not in the modern sense of selling off publicly-owned utilities, but in a much more fundamental way: what passed into **private ownership was land and bodies**. On the first count, countryside that for centuries had been open to all was fenced off and became the inviolable property of wealthy individuals. As a direct result, the landscape changed dramatically, and so did the lives of millions of people who lived upon it.

The appropriation was carried out legally, through a series of acts of parliament.... But the effect on the rural working class was catastrophic. Families who had depended on access to common ground became landless trespassers... New boundaries - ditches, hedges and walls - not only created a more ordered vision of the countryside, but acted as a visual reminder of the power of landlords to exclude outsiders.... What is less frequently remarked upon is the way in which a comparable **process of enclosure** was acted out in the 18th century on bodies, primarily **on women's bodies**. The effect was to divide women into two classes: wives who were indubitably the property of their husbands, and unmarried or abandoned women who, not belonging to one master, ran the risk of being regarded as the collective property of all.

The link between the ownership of land and the ownership of women was not accidental: just as the wealthy wanted control of vast estates, they also wanted certainty about the sons and heirs who would inherit the property they had gone to so much trouble to secure. At a time when blood tests to establish paternity had not yet been

dreamt of, this was hardly the easiest goal to achieve. What the ruling elite could do, and did with extraordinary thoroughness, was to take more effective control of women's bodies. They did it by outlawing all forms of marriage except one that was formal and indissoluble, except by act of parliament - and they made sure that even this perilous and expensive escape route was not open to women.

4. Whereas the party of the first part . . .

LAURENCE: So, we want to ask you what are our choices now that we are making this drama for a company called...

TERRE: Hessischer Rundfunk...

LAURENCE: ...this... what are our choices in terms of licenses, if we have any choice.

NICOLAS MALEVÉ: It depends on the level of correctness or legality you want to have. Because first, before making the choice, you have to see if you have cleared beforehand all the rights of the material you are using.

TERRE: Yeah, okay, next question...

NICOLAS: It's as simple as that. What I mean is the first step into this whole copyright thing is that the law postulates that you have a kind of pure, original material to begin with.

TERRE: Which is basically impossible, I would say for anybody. Not only in the case of sample based work, but...

NICOLAS: Yeah, if you are a pure creative genius, then... **(LAUGHS)** So basically, yes, this is a kind of **legal fiction**.

LAURENCE: **Imagine we have pure, cleared, original, new material.**

NICOLAS: Especially in the European copyright, you may want to protect or to enforce your moral rights on the contents. So it means that basically you can agree that you sell out your rights for distribution, for other people playing your stuff and working with it, but you can still want to enforce the fact that you don't want that your message would be mocked or criticized or reharnessed for another kind of message. So that's a difference that only applies in Europe. But this is a very important one because it really changes the way you can approach the discussion between copyright and free speech. In America, basically as soon as you sell your copyright you also sell away your moral rights. That is not the case in Europe, so the way this debate is defined is completely different.

LAWYER: *I searched our file, and I finally found a copy of the contract with your original publisher.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Oh, good. Suddenly I feel so much better.*

LAWYER: *Uh, whereas the party of the first part - that's the publisher - does hereby...*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Excuse me, may I read this, please?*

LAWYER: *You may not be able to read it. It's in "legalese."*

FEMALE AUTHOR: (READING) *Oh my.*

LAWYER: *Are you alright?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *I can't believe that I signed this. I signed away my right... Oh, I feel so foolish. Well, I guess there's nothing left to do but to make amends.*

LAWYER: *Make what?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *As painful as it sounds, I owe an apology. (CHUCKLES)*

NICOLAS: I was speaking first about the basic steps you need to do before having the real choice about how you will license your work. So the first was you have the clearance of all rights. And the other is under which jurisdiction this work is produced. And this is really interesting in this case because we have a European non-willing-to-be-author, an American author working in Japan, and they will release their work in Germany. So it means that we have really the most complex situation ever, because we have American copyright, and European copyright, and also the Japanese law which is kind of a mix of American copyright and previous Japanese law. So it's really... this is even a question I can't answer myself - what jurisdiction will apply. I suppose this is where you will license your work, so if you go to GEMA I suppose you will be under the German law, but this is not really something that can be said for sure.

(VOICES START TO LAYER UPON ONE ANOTHER INDECIPHERABLY.)

NICOLAS: Basically, the most problematic thing in these copy-left licenses is that they are not defining authorship differently than the copyright system to start with. Of course, in the process they will transform it, they will even encourage the different people participating in the project to really behave differently, but the first step is still a step where the author is considered as pure, original, without influence or without taking material from somewhere else. Of course, in practice this is rarely a belief. It's more like a necessary step you have to do, and basically it's a matter of how can you clear rights. It's not that you really believe you are a romantic genius. It's more like whether you have protected your work from any attack. But in practice it means that you have already renounced a lot of possible use of your creativity, art, whatever.

I think one of the questions is, does it make sense to think in terms of licenses? And then of course there is the question of what is the context in which you use it? Because you can say every problem I have with copyright can be solved by a more clever jurisprudence about the exceptions to copyright. We can say, like if you go to the website Illegal Art, all the examples which are there are not there to be solved with the use of a Creative Commons license, because everybody using images, sounds, videos, in the cases you can see there, are doing this on purpose because this material is copyrighted by someone they want to criticize. It's also because they usually have a political agenda against or for things they are really engaged in, in a certain way, so the fact that this material is owned by someone is also part of the meaning of the work. It's because it's owned by Fox or Disney that it makes sense for them. Of course, then you cannot say, "Oh, but I should first give a call to Disney and ask them for permission." It doesn't make sense.

LAWYER: *Let me tell you, as soon as Marty Strimberg heard that you had been arrested he sent me straight to police headquarters.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *To spring me!*

LAWYER: *No, to make you a deal! He can get you anything you want at Warners, Fox, Paramount - anywhere except for the studio where your picture is being made. On account of your arrest you've been banned from the lot as a disruptive influence.*

NICOLAS: So where the problem is in this case is more that the exceptions to author's rights are not enforced sufficiently by the law, by the legislators, by the judges. Case by case, they are usually forgotten. People say, "But yeah, you should have asked for permission," which is really stupid.

So if you want to, in a way you can really say, "This kind of license stuff is not for me because I want to use resources which are owned by someone, and I have good reasons not to ask for permission, and basically I am ready to fight for this position to be enforced." Then it does not make sense to go for a license. It makes sense to go for - I don't know what exactly, because that's more like solidarity with people who are sued, or it's more like propagating information about these problems, but it's something which I think is completely different from a position where you say, "I start with a license." For me, that's really important, because at the moment when you hear the advocates of Creative Commons - it's not the case with the Free Art License, because they are really clear about that, but - Creative Commons people are really saying, "Copyright is bad because...", and then they use all the reasons which really belong to the matter of exceptions, and then they say the solution is free licenses. **One is not the solution to the other. It does not mean that free license are bad, but they are just not the answer to the problem they are putting on the table.**

(VOICES START TO LAYER UPON ONE ANOTHER INDECIPHERABLY.)

TERRE: Laurence, what do you want to do with your publishing, if you even want to claim them as your publishing rights for this program?

LAURENCE: Well, for this particular program it's easy for me because there is already an author who is registered with GEMA. It's not like I'm giving up my work for free.

TERRE: I'm not registered with GEMA. I'm registered with BMI.

LAURENCE: ...with BMI. I mean, the author of the program will receive royalties in the normally understood copyright. So it is easier for me to say I don't want to be part of the collecting society. I would stand with the same decision even if I was working alone on the radio, because I have the ability to say, "No," to a job. But I won't do it for free for this kind of established program. It's just that I can afford to say, "No," to something because I have a standard, regular job, and I am not publishing CD's, I am not publishing radio, sounds, or any films, or any digital process.

But the thing is, I don't know about this, because I don't know if I can reclaim my moral rights of what I said during the program. This I don't know.

TERRE: For example, if I re-edit the things you say into something you don't like.

LAURENCE: Yeah, and you publish it, because there is no legal contract between us. But I would like to prevent myself from being able to do anything. I would prefer that.

You know, we had this meeting with artists and choreographers and so on, and they are all friends, and they all agree, "Yeah, you can borrow my work." But at one point one of them said, "Okay, but I can sue you if you use this." So, if you're not friends anymore the relationship could really be bitter. I would not sue you, but I can imagine that someone can use this power relationship of being the author of something to sue someone who was once a friend. And this is what really bothers me, because even if you are making bullshit out of what I said...

Well, I don't know, because the standard example is if your work or speech is used by the extreme Right, or anti-abortionists, or really sexist stuff, then maybe the author in you

will say, "Okay, for this moment I will use my author identity to stop this." I want to give up that power, but I don't know if that means really agreeing to be the weakest part in this - with all the clichés of being a woman and blah, blah, blah.

TERRE: Well, maybe because this is a collaboration, and if one person is totally disavowing any authorship, and the other person is totally claiming 100% authorship - if your share is up for grabs in this kind of colonialist way, which is another lie to say I am the 100% author - that maybe this is the way to address this within the program. This contradiction of one person taking one stance, and the other person taking the other, and both being kind of hypocritical or false in a way. My stance clearly being more hypocritical than yours, but...

LAURENCE: No, no. It's also about where we are. It's a radio drama, for a radio program. And we were joking about the fact that if it's Terre Thaemlitz asking, we can send any story and they will say yes. If I was the one sending a story alone I don't know if they would have said yes. So it's also that I am comfortable enough to give up authorship on this because it's your job. It's not mine to be a sound media producer. It's not mine. Maybe my job will be to be consistent with the ideas that I believe.

TERRE: So you're conceding your rights to me...?

LAURENCE: Yeah...

TERRE: Okay, I believe this constitutes a legal verbal contract, so we'll stop recording right now.

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5. A special message from Peggy Phelan (FROM "UNMARKED: THE POLITICS OF PERFORMANCE")

"SKIN, SKIN,
YA NA
KNOW ME?"



ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

And now, a special message from Peggy Phelan.

PEGGY PHELAN: Visibility is a trap; it summons surveillance and the law; it provokes voyeurism, fetishism, the colonialist/imperial appetite for possession. Yet it retains a certain political appeal. Visibility politics have practical consequences; a line can be drawn between a practice (getting someone seen or read) and a theory (if you are seen it is harder for "them" to ignore you, to construct a punitive canon); the two can be reproductive. While there is a deeply ethical appeal in the desire for a more inclusive representational landscape and certainly underrepresented communities can be empowered by an enhanced visibility, the terms of this visibility often erode the punitive power of these identities. A much more nuanced relationship to the power of visibility needs to be pursued than the Left currently engages.

Arguing that communities of the hitherto under-represented will be made stronger if representational economies reflect and see them, progressive cultural activists have staked a huge amount on increasing and expanding the visibility of racial, ethnic, and sexual "others". It is assumed that disenfranchised communities who see their members within the representational field will feel greater pride in being part of such a community, and those who are not in such a community will increase their understanding of the diversity and strength of such communities. Implicit within this argument are several **presumptions** which bear further scrutiny:

1. Identities are visibly marked so the resemblance between the African-American on the television and the African-American on the street helps the observer see they are members of the same community. Reading physical resemblance is a way of identifying community.
2. The relationship between representation and identity is linear and smoothly mimetic. What one sees is who one is.
3. If one's mimetic likeness is not represented, one is not addressed.
4. Increased visibility equals increased power.

Each presumption reflects the ideology of the visible, an ideology which **erases the power of the unmarked, unspoken, and unseen.**

...The **focus on skin** as the visible **marker of race** is itself a form of feminizing those races which are not white. Reading the **body as the sign of identity** is the way men regulate the bodies of women. Lorene Cary tells a West Indian fold tale in *Black Ice*. A woman drapes her skin across a chair in the bedroom she shares with her husband and slips out a window to enjoy the night. Night after night she leaves their bed. (Indigenous dream interpreters, as against Freudian ones, would say she is walking with *The Invisible*.) She is always careful to return before her husband wakes. She slips back into her skin and then back into their bed. But one night her husband wakes and sees her skin across the chair. He is distraught. He seeks the advice of "an old woman in the village." She tells him to take some salt and rub the inside of the empty skin with it. A few nights later, the woman leaves again and the husband applies the salt to her skin. When she returns to her skin it will not yield: "Skin, skin, ya na know me?" she screams. Caught between her body and her spirit, her insides keep her out. The husband who believes he has the right to the entrances and exits of her body can coat the inside of her skin with salt but he cannot keep her home. His failure to hold her in their bed prompts him to make her skin unable to house her spirit. Both exiled, her question hangs in the air: "Skin, skin, ya na know me?" The woman's voice cannot reanimate her skin. And she remains lost to her own body because of this desire to mark it as his.

6. Fetishism as a means of authoring the invisible

ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Something tragic happened at the studio after you left. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but...*

TERRE: (SPOKEN IN A WHISPER, SOUND OF SNORING COMING THROUGH WALL) This is Terre Thaeplitz on a special covert mission for the Laurence Rassel show.

It's about 3am on July 27th, 2005, and we're here at my home in Japan, just outside the door to my bedroom, where our star Laurence and her partner Nicolas are sleeping. Maybe you can hear the snoring inside. They've had a long day. **(LAUGHS)**

With this program's emphasis on issues of authorship, and particularly a kind of feminist approach toward the way in which **authorship relates to a kind of patriarchal authoring of our bodies**, Laurence and I have been struggling with **how to really bring a notion of the body into this program**. In particular, Laurence as a woman, and myself as a transgendered person - how do we invoke our bodies in a kind of physical but non-essentialist way?

I have an idea, but it involves sneaking into their room while they sleep. We'll have to be quiet. So come on with me. **(OPEN DOOR, QUIETLY ENTER)** Okay, the door's open. They seem to be well asleep. It's dark. Okay, I'm in. I thought that the snoring was coming from Nicolas, but it's actually coming from Laurence.

One of the main things Laurence and I have been talking about is the dynamic of how this program "The Laurence Rassel Show", as a process of "authoring" her work in relation to her individual name, is in a way an act of violence against her feminist resistance to notions of authorship, and how this reflects a kind of personal crisis she has been going through as a result of doing more work on her own, outside of the context of the collaborative group Constant. Simultaneously, by collaborating with me, as someone whose name is already "authored" and in some way known, Laurence is interested in critically engaging this notion of "notoriety" or "fame" and the desire to be visible. So our collaborative relationship incorporates a kind of fetishism on her part of myself as someone who she insists is "known" or "famous."

We wanted to **counter this notion of fetishizing the recognized or "authored" body** with a story about the corresponding way in which the patriarchal notions of authorship also extend to the fetishization of the invisible, or the non-author. Because Laurence and I are both skeptical of the ways in which everyone in left-wing circles are talking about "active invisibility" and the power of the unseen. Anyone who has followed my work also knows that my interest in transgenderism is also influenced by this notion of being between visible or easily recognized identities, including spaces between conventional transgendered identities such as Drag Queen or Drag King, etc. Hold on, I've got to be quiet for a second...

Okay. So I thought Laurence's exploitation of my character as someone "famous" should be paralleled by my fetishization of her character as an "unknown". But when we factor in a notion of the body, in this case the fetishization of Laurence as an unknown female body, it becomes difficult to come up with imaginative ways to carry out such fetishism in a physical manner without falling into the traps of conventional sexualizations of the female body, which would be boring or possibly sexist, or both.

So, that's why I've brought you into their room tonight. I've been slowly working my way across the room, at the foot of their futon, toward their luggage. My idea is to find their dirty laundry, and sniff it in a fetishistic way. I have to tell you, I'm not into this kind of thing at all, but I am committed to this broadcast and will do what it takes to illustrate this notion that fetishism can be a means of authoring the "invisible" as well as the "visible."

Okay, I've found the bag, I think. Hold on, it's kind of inside their luggage. Both Laurence and Nicolas' laundry is in a shared bag. **(MOVING PLASTIC BAG MAKES NOISE)** Oh shit, this isn't good, the plastic's making too much noise. If they wake up I don't know how I'm going to explain this. Okay, so both of their laundry is here in this bag... **(MOVING PLASTIC BAG MAKES NOISE)** Shit.

It's kind of damp. You should know it's been well above 30 degrees every day here,

with terrible humidity, so everything is sweaty. **(MOVING PLASTIC BAG MAKES NOISE.)** I've just got to get it over with. Okay. Okay, so I've pulled out a handful of things. I haven't made any attempt to distinguish between what is Laurence's and what might be Nicolas' - that seems to be the best way for me to avoid problematics of having this action fixate on the female body. We've got a body mix of laundry between hers and Nicolas'.

Okay. This is it - I'm going to breath in deep... **(SNIFFS AND COUGHS)**

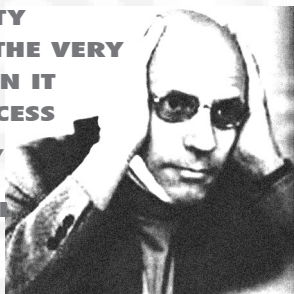
(FUNKY MUSIC PLAYS)

DIRECTOR: *Cut! Okay, kill the music. Let's start clearing this smoke. Get those doors open.*

WOMAN: *Jessica, you look so bewildered....*

7. A special message from Michele Foucault (FROM "WHAT IS AN AUTHOR?")

AS OUR SOCIETY CHANGES, AT THE VERY MOMENT WHEN IT IS IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGING, THE AUTHOR FUNCTION WILL DISAPPEAR.



ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

And now, a special message from Michel Foucault.

MICHEL FOUCAULT: (SPEAKING FRENCH) The truth is quite the contrary: the author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works, he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction. In fact, if we are accustomed to presenting the author as a genius, as a perpetual surging of invention, it is because, in reality, we make him function in exactly the opposite fashion. One can say that the author is an ideological product, since we represent him as the opposite of his historically real function. (When a historically given function is represented in a figure that inverts it, one has an ideological production.) The author is therefore the ideological figure by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning.

In saying this, I seem to call for a form of culture in which fiction would not be limited by the figure of the author. It would be pure romanticism, however, to imagine a culture in which the fictive would operate in an absolutely free state, in which fiction would be put at the disposal of everyone and would develop without passing through something like a necessary or constraining figure. Although, since the eighteenth century, the author has played the role of the regulator of the fictive, a role quite characteristic of our era of industrial and bourgeois society, of individualism and private property, still,

given the historical modifications that are taking place, it does not seem necessary that the author-function remain constant in form, complexity, and even in existence. I think that, as our society changes, at the very moment when it is in the process of changing, the author function will disappear, and in such a manner that fiction and its polysemic texts will once again function according to another mode, but still with a system of constraint - one which will no longer be the author, but which will have to be determined or, perhaps, experienced.

8. Laurence's confession

MALE ANNOUNCER: *Are you happy with your current job? Do you want a career doing something you love? A federally certified training program that will qualify you to become a licensed technician. A career demands respect, good pay and benefits, but only for skilled, hands on technicians. A better future is only a phone call away. Call now! 800-466-397.*

LAURENCE: The time for me has come to confess. I have to tell someone what happened to me, what I did. I was not so young and innocent, I was not inexperienced, but still I was new in Hollywood, full of dreams, stars, expectations - or maybe not. I was young and innocent, and inexperienced, and really far from Hollywood... I'll be whoever you want for tonight. You want drama, I give you drama; you want violence, I give you violence; you want sex, well, uh, I'll give you gender. Are you ready? Shall we start now?

On a sunny Sunday afternoon, on a beach in Spain, when beaches still existed... maybe some of you remember these places full of sand, half naked people lying down, loving the sun on their skin, yes this era where you could exhibit your faces, arms, bellies, legs and more without being burned to death, yes in those times... I was myself on the beach, not so, uh, undressed, but, uh, then, suddenly coming from the past, or from the future, or from having lunch together, Terre Thaemlitz, the internationally acclaimed multimedia producer, all glittering in his costume made of stars - or maybe, sweating in his orange shorts which looked more like pajamas - proposed to me this strange deal that would change my life forever, or not. Here is what he said:

MAN: *I've always loved you, you know that!*

WOMAN: *Is that why you walked out on me?*

MAN: *I told you, your father threatened to ruin me if I didn't stay away from you!*

WOMAN: *I'm sorry, Terre, I just find it very hard to believe.*

MAN: *Right now we should be talking about one thing - marriage. Because, believe me, I want to spend the rest of my life with you.*

WOMAN: *Are you sure about that?*

MAN: *I'm positive.*

WOMAN: *Well, I'm happy for you. But right now, Terre, I'm not sure about anything, least of all myself. Now if you'll excuse me, I need to be alone. (WEEPING)*

LAURENCE: "In exchange for your story - yes, the story of your life! No, do not protest, your life is wonderful! I always dreamt to be a feminist nobody, to be anybody, what a subversive act, what an act of resistance, how brave you must be to be no one! So I beg you, give me your story, and in exchange, I can bring you eternal life.

You will be a star among the stars. Your name will be whispered, and known throughout the world, as the one who inspired Terre Thaemlitz. The one who has the dullest and most pessimistic life on earth for him to envy: the invisible feminist!"

I was such a fool, longing for someone who could finally see my active invisibility, someone who wouldn't use my name in vain, someone I could disappear within. So I gave him anything he wanted - my memories, my dull little stories, and more... my dreams. Such a fool I was. It's funny, I didn't want to be star, it was Terre's idea, I would have done anything for him (weeping).

WOMAN: *I never wanted to be a star. It was all Jerry's idea. I would have done anything for him. Jerry, Scott... I sure know how to pick 'em, don't I?*

LAURENCE: Fool I was! Curiosity pushed me toward his studio. And you know, curiosity killed the cat, but I am no cat.... So curiosity pushed me toward his studio. He made me swear I will never reveal its location, even now that I, that he... I won't break this promise.

What a shock! What a delusion! He had transformed my story, my dreams, my memories into a drama! Can you imagine, a drama, with a plot and everything, full of action, sex, music and violence? Can you imagine how hurt I felt to see my dull, simple, feminist life turned into a dog and pony show, full of sex, and transgenderism? A mix of "Porky's," "Halloween" and "Flashdance?"

PRESS: *Why do we call you Hollywood's most controversial producer?*

PRODUCER: *Because you hate my pictures. The critics hate my pictures. Everybody hates my pictures except the public.*

PRESS: *And today you started shooting a new motion picture?*

PRODUCER: *Yes.*

PRESS: *Do you anticipate another box office hit?*

PRODUCER: *It's got everything today's young movie goers want: music, sex and violence.*

PRESS: *Too much violence, perhaps?*

PRODUCER: *What's too much?*

PRESS: *I'm referring to the scene where the psychotic killer uses a flame thrower on a group of break dancers...*

FEMALE AUTHOR: (RESPONDING TO PREVIOUS INTERVIEW ON TELEVISION) *That's not my book! I didn't write that!*

FRIEND: *It looks like that Mr. Leidecker is putting some of his own ideas into the movie.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Well, it's high time they heard some of my ideas.*

FRIEND: *Calling the TV station?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *My publisher! I'm going to put a stop to this nonsense even if I have to fly out to Hollywood.*

LAWYER: *What do I know about the picture? Well, it's guaranteed box office magic, that's all. It's a combination of "Halloween," "Porky's" and "Flashdance."*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *You can't be serious!*

LAWYER: *Oh yeah, you've got yourself a hot property here. You ought to follow it up real quick. Have you ever written any other books like this?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *I've never written one book like that. Look, I don't know what my publisher told you, but I didn't come out here to take advantage of an intolerable situation.*

LAWYER: *Are you saying you don't want a piece of the action?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *I only want to determine my legal rights to prevent that producer from debasing my novel. I was told that you could help me.*

LAWYER: *I make deals. And apparently you don't want a deal, so what can I do? Look, I'll tell ya, I'll assign someone from my staff to dig up your contract and we'll be in touch.*

LAURENCE: *I swore to stop this shameful work. I wanted to keep my integrity, my active invisibility, to be faithful to all my anonymous sisters, and never, never enter this male paradoxical stardom.*

But he laughed at me. He didn't only just want my name, my anonymity. He broke my spirit, he even broke my heart. I couldn't let him to do that. I am no creative genius! A broken heart is only good on the market for geniuses and authors. I needed to stay an invisible feminist with a full heart, and full spirit. He laughed at me again, because he knew. He knew because I gave them to him, I gave my dreams to him. Such a fool I was. He knew that I always wanted to be a performer...

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *I don't know how to explain this, but I want to be a performer. And I knew if I didn't give it a shot - a real shot - that I'd be miserable. See, that's why I answered the ad to Les Champignons. Was that a crime?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Of course not. Would you like a coffee?*

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *Sure.*

LAURENCE: *I am not proud of what I did, but I did it, so I deserve my money. But he won't let me tell the story. He bought my name, he played with my dreams, he ripped my skin off, let me out of her. Now I have to pretend I am a writer, I have to pretend I am an actor, I have to pretend I am an author...*

PRODUCER: *What do you say, kid? Out for some early morning air?*

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *I've got to talk to you.*

PRODUCER: *So, talk...*

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *I need my money.*

PRODUCER: *We already had that conversation. You get it when you're finished.*

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *Well I'm finished!*

PRODUCER: *Come on now, kid! We got a deal. You're in it until I say otherwise.*

TRANSGENDER AUTHOR: *Now look! You listen to me! I'm not particularly proud of what I had to do to earn that money, but I did it and I want what's coming to me!*

PRODUCER: *You're a nice kid, but don't you ever touch me like that again! Now tonight you be there or you don't see a dime, you got that?*

Fritz! **(DOG BARKS)** Come on, Fritz.

LAURENCE: He played with my dreams, he ripped my skin off, let me out of her. Now I have to pretend I am a writer, I have to pretend I am an actor, I have to pretend I am an author... I have to stop this torture! I have to stop him raising all this creativity inside of me! I have to kill the angel he is awakening in me! I have to stop him! I have to stop him!

CREATIVE GENIUS: *What was I going to do? Spend the rest of my life working in this rinky-dink club? You ever try to tell jokes when someone's got their hands on your throat?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Surely murder isn't the answer.*

CREATIVE GENIUS: *Yeah, well, you call it murder. I call it a career move. He says, "Kid, you're good! Here's a long term contract. It's your shot, your big break." He broke my spirit. That man broke my heart. I couldn't let him do that. I'm a creative genius. Fair is fair. He gave me a shot, I gave him a shot.... Ba-dum-pum... I should have shoved you under that stage light.*

LAURENCE: For reasons of copyright, the rest of the story will be kept confidential.

CREATIVE GENIUS: (CLAPPING) *That was great! That was great! I really enjoyed that, you know? I mean, you're quite a performer! You should get yourself a guild card. Who writes your material? I mean, who writes this stuff? You know, your punch lines just don't work. You ever think of taking your act on the road? You should play Vegas.... That reminds me, I better cancel my tickets. It doesn't look like I'm going to be going. It's too bad. I could've knocked 'em dead.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *I'm sure you would have.*

9. A special message from Michel de Certeau (FROM "PRACTICE OF EVERYDAY LIFE")

ANNOUNCER: And now, a special message from Michel de Certeau.

MICHEL DE CERTEAU: The dynamic that leads living beings to become signs, to find in a discourse the means of transforming themselves into a unit of meaning, into an identity. To finally pass from this opaque and dispersed flesh from this exorbitant and troubled life, to the limpidness of a word, to become a fragment of language, a single name, that can be read and quoted by others... eager to finally have or be a name, to be called, to be transformed into a saying, even at the price of her/his life. The intextuation of the body corresponds to the incarnation of the law; it supports it, it even seems to establish it, and in any case it serves it. For the law plays on it: "Give me your body and I will give you meaning, I will make you a name and a word in my discourse." The two problematics contain each other, and perhaps the law would have no power if it were not able to support itself on the obscure desire to exchange one's flesh for a glorious body, to be written, even if it means dying, and to be transformed into a recognized word.

10. On transgendered authorship

ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

TERRE: And I think, maybe this is how we can get into this here, is that, um...

When I think about transgendered authorship, or transgendered ownership and this idea of how the "name" functions, then I always have to think about the way that the [name functions for transgendered people legally](#), in terms of [claiming one's identity](#) on your identification cards and at work and these kinds of things. For myself, this is always a discouraging way to approach possession of the self, possession of your identity, such as by changing your name from a masculine name to a feminine name.

LAURENCE: Don't you think you can say this because you have an ambiguous name, so you didn't have the need to change? You are kind of ironic in your critique towards people who want to fit in, because you have it easy, right?

TERRE: Well, I do think that maybe my identity has been influenced from both feminine and masculine social patterns by having this kind of androgynous name in the middle. And different groups, like women's culture and men's culture, and different people who identify with those cultures, trying to reclaim my name for me and reassure me that it's more one side than the other. Like male friends saying, "No, but, it's a guy's name," or women saying, "Yes, but it's this kind of liberation." It's never about my own position to reclaim my name, but always about my name being reclaimed by the agendas of the people that I'm associating with.

But then, in relation to this idea of gender and naming, and claiming a name, and authoring yourself, and authoring your own identity - does this idea of a Male-to-Female claiming a feminine name always have to function as an extension of patriarchal ownership? Is it always a gesture of a man or former-man claiming the problematically feminine? Or is there a kind of transgendered ownership of identity, of property, that I might also find for myself which is not about reclaiming the feminine from a patriarchal side - it's not about claiming the masculine - it's actually about a complication of the name as it functions in an amorphous state. I think, in a way, my own name tends to do that. The way in which my parents gave me - their son - a Spanish woman's name has done this by always keeping my name, my identity, and my relationship to my name in a state of flux, and never having it crystallize for myself, but crystallized through the interactions of how others relate to that name.

LAURENCE: I have a question maybe not linked to this, but what do you think about this idea that transgendered/transsexual people, in a way, give birth to themselves - so they are the ultimate creator or author. They give themselves a body, they give themselves a name.... Or do you think that's part of what society expects - that you fit, and you are commodifying your body because it's in exchange of money that you go through hormones, surgery and so on? Because I think there is something empowering in saying, "Okay, I can decide for myself what will be the form of my body."

It's also about Demi Moore, when she went through all of those surgeries, that in a way she was reclaiming the right to alter her own body. So, personally, I'm confused about this idea... Why not do it, in a way? And then you have an artist like Orlan, who is really selling this idea, and at the same time being a feminist and an artist and so on. But in the end they are selling these images and these bodies, so I don't know... What do you think? Is it entering a market of devices that you exchange for money - meaning your own image and name? Or is it still something really powerful?

TERRE: When I look at members of the transsexual community who are actively seeking out physical alteration of their bodies... on the one hand, of course, I have this anti-essentialist reaction against it - that it's about transforming bodies towards something that is, in the end, I think, conservative. But on the other hand, I do have this envy of their body transformations, which I feel are beyond my capacity. And part of that is because of the [mythology in the media about the beautiful, successful transsexual](#). Because that's who you see in the media. You don't see the people who got totally fucked up, and look totally fucked up - which I would say are the majority.

The other day I was watching a documentary on Japanese television about a Male-to-Female transsexual who was in the process of transitioning. And of course, almost any representation you see in the mass media is going to be about a Male-to-Female who is aspiring to be the perfect woman, the standard woman, the marriage minded woman and these sorts of things - because that's what's safest. It's safer to progress [transition] from the symbolically empowered to the disempowered, right? I think that it's set up to deny the Female-to-Male transgendered community visibility at any cost, because that is a community that presents a challenge to the status quo in terms of power dynamics. If you are giving up power dynamics, like if you are giving up the Male World to enter the Feminine World and this sort of bullshit, then in a way it's seen as a luxury, you know what I mean? It's almost like a monk who is giving up things of worldly possession in order to enter a Zen state of transgendered realization. But if you think about the history of the Female-to-Male, then instantly it becomes a challenge because you are introducing a new breed of masculinity into the male workplace, into the male social structure. It then becomes a threat on this very simplistic, biological-minded level.

But for me, I think in the end transitioning is always co-opted by industry. As an idea, conceptually you can try to imagine it's something empowering, but in the end you are not free to change your body how you like. You are free to change your body how you can afford, or how the technology is directed to change it. But you're not really free. You mentioned Orlan - I think this is the kind of thing Orlan brings out. You can just imagine the kinds of legal contracts that she must sign with these medical professionals before they do these surgeries that are not conventionally beautifying.

I think that this kind of very optimistic rhetoric about transgendered empowerment happening through transitioning is, in the end, the thing that is the most entrapping about the transgendered community. And the thing that is the most exclusionary. And in the end, the thing that is the most reactionarily conservative. For me, transgenderism arises out of a social problem of not fitting in. And it comes out of this crisis - not only a gender crisis, but a larger crisis of social relations. It's **not so much a crisis of the body**, which Gender Identity Disorder and the medical industry want to present it as being about. **It's more of a crisis of social relations.** And so in that sense, for me, the transsexual community that focuses on transitioning the body - on physically altering the body - is... in the end, it's capitulatory. The actual radicality that transsexuals are allowed is only to the extent of acting up within the confines of the two-gender system that the medical industry is ascribed around.

11. A special message from Roland Barthes (FROM "LA MORT DE L'AUTEUR")

THE TEXT IS A TISSUE
OF QUOTATIONS
DRAWN FROM
THE INNUMERABLE
CENTURIES
OF CULTURE.



ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

And now, a special message from Roland Barthes.

ROLAND BARTHES: (SPEAKING FRENCH) We know now that a **text is** not a line of words releasing a single "theological" meaning (the "message" of the Author-God) but a **multi-dimensional space** in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. **The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.** Similar to Bouvard and Pecuchet, those eternal copyists, at once sublime and comic and whose profound ridiculousness indicates precisely the truth of writing, the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any one of them. Did he wish to express himself, he ought at least to know that the inner "thing" he thinks to "translate" is itself only a ready-formed dictionary, its **words only explainable through other words, and so on indefinitely**; something experienced in exemplary fashion by the young Thomas de Quincey, he who was so good at Greek that in order to translate absolutely modern ideas and images into that dead language, he had, so Baudelaire tells us, created for himself an unending dictionary, vastly more extensive and complex than those resulting from the ordinary patience of purely literary themes (in *Paradis Artificiels*). Succeeding the Author, the scriptor no longer bears within him passions, humours, feelings, impressions, but rather this immense dictionary from which he draws a writing that can know no halt: life never does more than imitate the book, and the book itself is only a tissue of signs imitation that is lost, infinitely deferred.

LAURENCE: It's quite, at the same time funny and paradoxical, because at the same time that women were reclaiming the gender, the flesh, the body behind the "author," and reclaiming there were female painters, there were female film makers, there were female writers - in '68 and '69 were the big and mythical texts by Barthes, "Death of the Author," and Foucault, "What is an Author." And both were claiming the death of the author for the good of the birth of the reader. So on the one hand it goes with what feminists were expecting, meaning to kill the author and to get rid of this patriarchal figure of the genius, the male author. But at the same time, it was destroying the location feminists would need to occupy and act as if "author" was their location. So it was this kind of twist in the times. I think it's kind of **funny that when we claim to be an author - finally - well, he died.**

It proved that women or feminists were always too late, in a way. When they reclaim the author, well, it's not in fashion any more. It's like, okay, you are too late. You are old fashioned. So that means women are chasing the figure of the author for centuries. Because before it was God. And then it was biology, you know, man as the impregnator of his own work. And then it was the existentialist and the conceptual author. And then it was something else, and then it was something else... So they are always chasing the figure of the author. They are always behind. But at the same time, paradoxically, I think it's nice that we - if we say "we" as feminists, or we are women now - we will never get this place. We will never catch it. I mean, we'll never get the right location. I think this is nice, always displacing, always chasing, always moving, always chasing after something we cannot have. It makes us have a lot of energy, and useless expectations, or useless movements. And I like it.

TERRE: I think there's also maybe this kind of way in which culturally it (Barthes, Foucault, etc.) was **encouraging a kind of suicide of the author.** Because you could say that the scenario that would allow on the patriarchal side to claim the death of the author, was also the same laxing that would allow other people who weren't traditional authors to be able to step forward a bit.

LAURENCE: But maybe they also wanted to proclaim their death before the sons are coming. Because in '68 and '69, that was really the myth or dream or utopia of May '68, and that was really the death of the fathers after the War. I think they preferred to do it themselves, before it happens to them. Because the French intellectuals who

did not commit suicide - to quote you - in time, they were killed by the younger ones. I mean, conceptually, of course. We are talking really conceptually. If you look at the nouvelle vague author's policy, it was really... But they are also caught in this paradoxical moment because they made it more difficult to be an author, but at the same time they didn't want to be authors. So they lose you in a quiz or a trap or a labyrinth, so you don't know how can I be an author... well, never.

FEMALE AUTHOR: (ANSWERING PHONE) Hello?

SHERIFF: *I hate to be a bother to you, Ma'am, but something mighty peculiar has happened down here and...*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Well what do you mean by "peculiar," sheriff?*

SHERIFF: *I mean maybe murder peculiar.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Murder?*

FRIEND: *I told this old fool you shouldn't be coming down here.*

SHERIFF: *Oh, would you zip it up! I'm concluding official business here.*

FRIEND: *And I'm telling you there wasn't any murder. Those nice little girls couldn't murder anyone. Especially their own daddy.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Will one of you adolescents please tell me what's happening?*

SHERIFF: *Some rich fella...*

FRIEND: *Sheriff, why don't you let the little ladies tell it themselves, instead of you interrupting?*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Good idea.*

SHERIFF: *Ladies...!*

LAURENCE: Yeah, feminists are still sad and angry toward the French intellectuals from the '50s, '60s, and beginning of the '70s, because they would never claim clearly a link to feminist work and theory. So when they are facing these changes in society - when they want to get rid of the patriarchal figure, of the father who is enclosing the education system, the prison, so on and so forth - they never would claim their link to feminist work and history. But funnily enough, if you turn to the Anglo-Saxon theory, the feminists are using the French intellectuals like Barthes, Foucault, Deleuze and so on, in their own practice. Because in France and in Belgium it's not part of the curriculum. You cannot get a diploma in Queer Studies, Gender Studies, Feminist Studies, Post-Colonial Studies, or whatever. It's still something you do on the side, or just one post-graduate course, but it's not part of the theoretical knowledge that is taught inside the University. It's still marginalized in a way. I mean, if you don't know Marx, intellectual people will laugh at you. But if you don't know anything about feminist history, it's okay. You'll get your diploma with no problem.

FRIEND: (REPEATING LOOP) *Those nice little girls couldn't murder anyone. Especially their own daddy.*

ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Would you like to defend me on a murder charge?*

LAWYER: *Mur...murder? I'm not a real lawyer. I'm in show business...*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Well, we may be able to avoid it, but it will take very hard work and a good deal of research. Are you game?*

LAWYER: *Name it! I will do anything to stay out of a courtroom.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Good!*

12. Terre's Confession

LAURENCE: The time has come for me to confess.

TERRE: It smells. Everywhere smells of corpses. of rotten flesh. It's unclear if the smell comes from this room, or has seeped in from outside. the smell seeps into my body, into my breath, into this story. There are many corpses. I do not know who died first. there is no accurate timeline, because some of the deceased have not died yet, or others were born out of their deaths, confusing the timeline.

Between the births of my older brother and myself, my mother, who lives but has died in many ways through her life, gave birth to a dead body - a miscarriage she believed to be female. She sometimes said to me after I was born, "God took away my little girl, but gave me you instead." I was born into my dead sister's name, Terre, spelled in the feminine Spanish T-E-R-R-E. This was my first death - my boyhood body being murdered by a name that was neuter at least, if not outright feminine. The interpretation of the neuter falls toward the feminine as non-male, in the same sense interraciality falls toward the black as non-white. Like Tiger Woods being named the world famous black golfer, but only through the quiet murders of his asianness and whiteness. So I suffered a quiet murder of my maleness. I did not understand why, but that death seems important to my birth as transgendered.

The image of the transgendered murderer is engrained in Western culture - the transvestite of "Silence of the Lambs." I am predestined to kill, there has never been any doubt about that in my parents' mind. Serial suicide is my greatest crime. Reinvention of my body, my identity is my greatest crime. As a serial murderer, I am my greatest victim. But to be sure, there are other victims I have killed or am killing. One of them is Laurence, but she can tell that story. I wish to tell my story, which is not the story of myself, but a story of myself.

My parents, who are still alive but have both died in many ways through their lives, are Catholics. my father was a Dominican brother for almost 20 years prior to marrying my mother, who spent her impoverished childhood being cared for by nuns. My father was murdered endlessly by the male clergy of the Church. not only philosophically, but physically, through abuses and mutilations. My mother, on the other hand, was revived endlessly by the female clergy of the church from the literally murderous abuses of her father. Perhaps this is why they both agreed and were complicit in murdering the male in me. But that would not explain my male brothers, who were not murdered, but have both died in many ways through their lives in any case.

My dead sister - the one killed by birth - is the focus of my story. Although I should mention I have another younger sister who was adopted and not born at all, with no exact birthday or age or time of birth and therefore no precise age or time of death when she is finally murdered for the last time. As you can see, women are not born into the Thaemlitz family, unless they are born into murder like my first sister, who was indeed born, but dead.

I thought I was born into murder - born into the murder of my maleness - but in

the spring of 2002 I found out that I also was not born. Thinking of my sisters, this makes sense, because my transgenderism in a way makes my birth neuter, which, as I said before, falls toward the female, and women are not born into the Thaemlitz family. But no, I was not born. In the spring of 2002, while visiting my parents house which smells like decaying bodies, I came across a box I was not supposed to find. A box my parents had thought they murdered, but I had exhumed. This box contained the secret of my unbirth - that I was in fact born of tissues regenerated from my older sister's dead fetal tissue. No, you are right to be surprised. It made no sense to me either, and it has been hard for me to understand as well, because the records are exhumed and fragmented, like my mother and father themselves, incomplete and decayed. I do not mean I am a clone, but I am not exactly unlike a clone. We know there was not today's genetic engineering technology, but there were the roots of it. and I grew from that root. my sister's root. She was my father, the tissue from which I was modified and conjoined with a newly impregnated egg of my mother. That was my first murder - the killing of that impregnated egg - and I was born.

Un-murdering my sister - or, in fact, murdering the notion of her death through my birth - that was my second murder, in being born, to murder my sister's death; which was also my first suicide since I am genetically developed from her. Do you see what I am saying? It's all very complicated, I know. And it's difficult to talk about, because nobody is willing to believe what I have discovered. That is the perfect crime of it all - that the story itself is so unbelievable it murders its own truth, despite my body and voice being the material testimony of its accuracy. This is the smell of death and murder and suicide that plagues my breath, my words, my actions. This is the result of active disappearance as a strategy laid out by my parents - murder and death and suicide and the smell of decay from birth. You can hear the smell of my voice, can't you? That is the smell of my revenge.

SECURITY GUARD 1: *Security, we have a murder on stage three.*

GUARD 2: *Say what?*

GUARD 1: *Murder, Charley. And I think I've got a hold of the killer!*

FEMALE AUTHOR: (SCOFFS)

13. A special message from Virginia Woolf (FROM "A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN")

La creación se de

**IT WAS THE RELIC OF
THE SENSE OF
CHASTITY THAT
DICTATED
ANONYMITY
TO WOMEN.**



ANNOUNCER: And now a special message from Virginia Woolf.

VIRGINIA WOOLF: No girl could have walked to London and stood at the stage door, and forced her way into the presence of actor/managers, without doing herself

a violence and suffering, an anguish which may have been irrational. For chastity may be a fetish invented by certain societies for unknown reasons, but were not less inevitable. Chastity has even now a religious importance in a woman's life, and has so wrapped itself round with nerves and instincts, that to cut it free and bring it to the light of day demands courage of the rarest.

To have lived a free life in London in the sixteenth century would have meant for a woman who was poet and playwright a nervous stress and dilemma which might well have killed her. Had she survived, whatever she had written would have been twisted and deformed, issuing from a strained and morbid imagination. And undoubtedly, I thought, looking at the shelf where there are no plays by women, her work would have gone unsigned. That refuge she would have sought certainly. It was the relic of the sense of chastity that dictated anonymity to women even so late as the nineteenth century. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand, all the victims of inner strife as their writings prove, sought ineffectively to veil themselves by using the name of a man. Thus they did homage to the convention, which if not implanted by the other sex was liberally encouraged by them (the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-of man), that publicity in women is detestable. Anonymity runs in their blood. The desire to be veiled still possesses them. They are not even now as concerned about the health of their fame as men are, and, speaking generally, will pass a tombstone or a signpost without feeling an irresistible desire to cut their names on it, as Alf, Bert or Chas must do in obedience to their instinct, which murmurs if it sees a fine woman go by, or even a dog, Ce chien est a moi. And, of course, it may not be a dog, I thought, remembering Parliament Square, the Sieges Allee and other avenues; it may be a piece of land or a man with curly black hair. It is one of the great advantages of being a woman that one can pass even a very fine negress without wishing to make an Englishwoman of her."

14. Message from Yoyogi Park

ANNOUNCER: The Laurence Rassel Show, starring Laurence Rassel.

TERRE: We're in Yoyogi Park, in Shibuya, Tokyo.

LAURENCE: Yeah, yeah, that was last time we said that. We forgot to say that now.

TERRE: And, uh...

(PAUSE - TOTAL SILENCE)

LAURENCE: Maybe that will be a definition of feminism, is to not - I mean, to play or spread as many identities as possible - I mean the feminism we practice or I practice is not about men and women. It's about answering questions and putting doubt in everything.

(PAUSE - TOTAL SILENCE)

LAURENCE: Like in France, "Queer" is really hype. So it's like, you can have articles where "We're all Queer." Because you are not male or female, men or women, but inbetween. But you will never see any hype articles about "We're all Feminist." This is impossible.

(PAUSE - TOTAL SILENCE)

LAURENCE: For me, feminism is the only thing that stays subversive in a way. It's the only thing that people cannot stand. I mean, if you say, "I am a Marxist,"

people say, "Oh, wow!" and they ask you to tell them about Karl Marx. But if you say you are a feminist, they just go, I mean, at dinner they just change the conversation. I mean, it's still bothering people that you are a feminist. It already means that you are a kind of bitch, in a way, and that you are going to critique every male around, or every female around. So, I think for the moment, it's funny how it's still puzzling and bothering and annoying people. To make a feminist program, that would be really a challenge. It's like putting silence on the radio. Well, maybe in Germany, no... maybe somebody will stay. I hope somebody is there....

(PAUSE - TOTAL SILENCE)

15. Sayonara (closing theme)

WOMAN: *I refuse to say goodbye to you... Au révoir.*

FEMALE AUTHOR: *Au révoir.*

(ENDING THEME: "SUKI NI NATTA HITO," SUNG BY AIKO TSUJI)

ANNOUNCER: This has been the Laurence Rassel show.
Starring Laurence Rassel.
With Terre Thaemlitz.

Also featuring:

Tina Horne as Peggy Phelan.
Pierre de Jaeger as Michel Foucault.
Nicolas Malevé as himself and Roland Barthes.
Femke Snelting as Michel de Certeau.
Marie-Francoise Stewart as Joan Smith.
And Wendy Van Wynsberghe as Virginia Woolf.

Written by Laurence Rassel and Terre Thaemlitz.
Executive producer [...].
Produced for [...] 2005.

I'm your announcer, Aiko Tsuji, saying, "Sayonara."

(SINGING CONTINUES)

ANNOUNCER: At the tone, please stop your illegal recording of the preceding program.

Originally commissioned for broadcast by a German national broadcaster in 2005 . . . delayed and then cancelled in 2006 . . . archived in 2007 as part of Public Record's Articles of Incorporation Series . . . as well as simultaneously self-released by Comatonse Recordings (comatonse.com) and Constant vzw (constantvzw.com).

Constant is supported by De Vlaamse Minister van Cultuur, Jeugd, Sport en Brussel.

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A deluxe edition double-CD with over thirty minutes of bonus audio, poster, and transcript, is available from Comatonse Recordings and Constant vzw. "Useless Movement" is also available on limited edition 12" vinyl with extended remixes from Comatonse Recordings (C.016.EP).

Free download: www.publicrec.org/archive/2-01/2-01-014/2-01-014.html

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