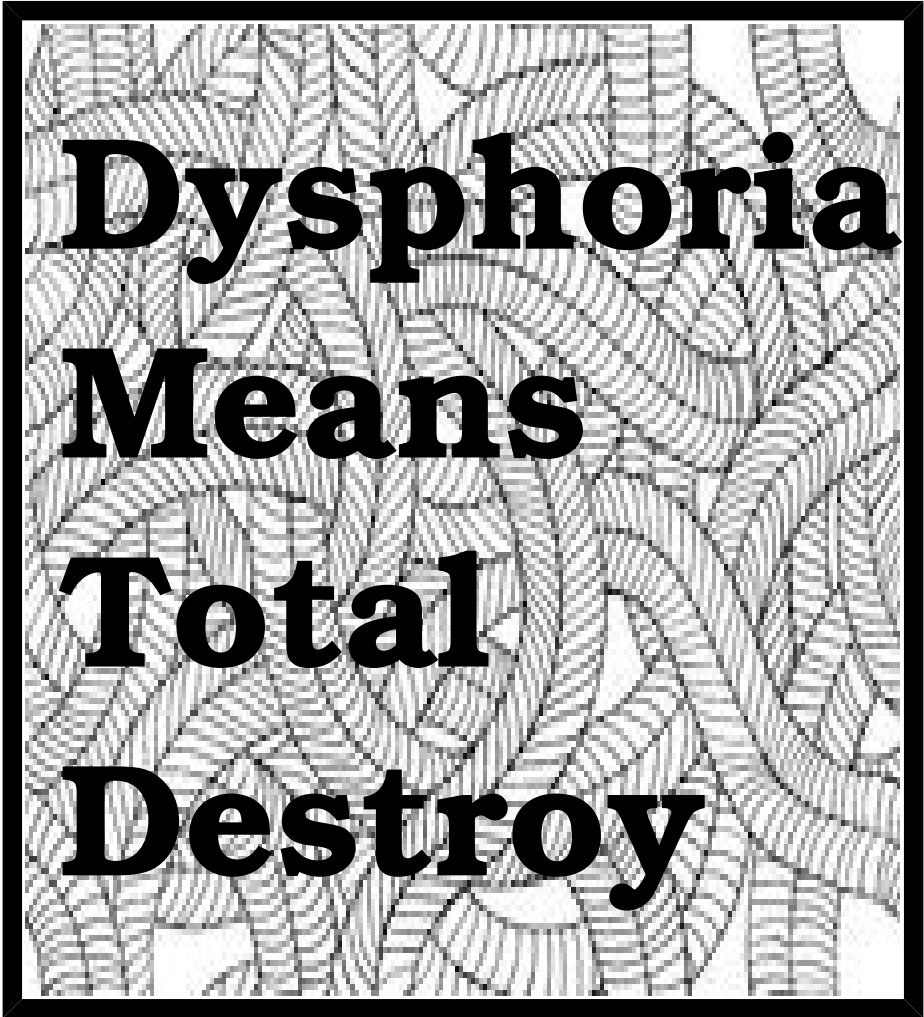


“There is no revolutionary identity here, only an irreconcilable conflict against and through identity. This despair and this hatred is the result. Subsequently, identity-based attacks upon gender will not be able to collapse gender. My taking hormones or getting surgery or whatever is simply my performing the conflict by the lines of power that run through me. It does not follow that these things constitute an attack upon gender itself, although it may stimulate it to evolve in order to maintain its existence...Where dysphoria can be softened by interacting with gender and attempting to bring the existent closer to the nonexistent, this will not affect power or the reproduction of the world. Where dysphoria becomes feral and lusts for dissolution becomes the exit from this world to a place that does not yet exist. To destroy gender, we must be willing to destroy the world it exists within. After all, there’s no hope any way... why not?”



**Dysphoria
Means
Total
Destroy**

Dysphoria is situated in the space where the existent and the nonexistent overlap - that is, in the world - and is typified by antagonism and fundamental negation. On the one hand, it is a negation of the existent (not-this) and desirous of the nonexistent (not-that) in the modes of which it is capable. Where dysphoria can be softened by interacting with gender and attempting to bring the existent closer to the nonexistent, this will not affect power or the reproduction of the world. Where dysphoria becomes feral and lusts for dissolution becomes the exit from this world to a place that does not yet exist. To destroy gender, we must be willing to destroy the world it exists within. After all, there's no hope any way... why not?

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action against gender emerges. Where dysphoria drives us towards destruction and away from interacting with gender on its own terms, we see something (or rather, Nothing) that dissolves, attacks, demolishes. This might often appear as destruction of the self or directed against the self such as suicide, drug (ab)use, self-harm, but also can appear as any other outwards action where I, unstable and miserable, unravel everything around me. These all are fundamentally an undoing, action which threatens the very existence of structure.

Misgendering is an instance of this structure imposing itself, spurring this conflict into even greater violence within me. The violence visited upon trans bodies is also an undoing of the conflict, although it works in attempt to stamp out this Nothing.

Every action we could take that interacts with gender directly will at best be ineffective, every effort to impose gender upon us is met by increased resistance, and all that is left is destroy. Only Nothing can destroy gender.

To elaborate and clarify: this world is typified by the operations of productive power, creating two overlapping shadows. At once, there is the existing, a direct result of power's creation. As a simultaneous corollary, the nonexistent appears as produced holes, gaps, shadows, a mirage of what could be but contradicting themselves fundamentally. Both the existent and the nonexistent are impossible, empty. Their existence is both enabled and plagued by a graininess that cannot be contained by either but which production finds itself needing. Gender exists as an aspect of the power that creates the world, and while the obvious manifestations of gender can be separated from other aspects of power, its root is this power.

The last three weeks, every stranger I have come across has misgendered me, whether I'm femming it up or not. In the mirrored elevator doors at work my face looks tired, angular in all the wrong ways. With some unease, I recognize my dad in my reflection. Both my spiro and estro pills ran out today, and I'm flipping out. They're probably going to arrive Monday, but they might have gotten lost in untracked airmail and what the fuck am I going to do if I've got to spend another Benjamin and wait three weeks more? I want to scream. I'm filled with steam.

I'm warding off the desire to hit myself, and so I start daydreaming in my gray cubicle. I see a hijacked airliner turn and head directly towards my desk. I'm staring it down, making ridiculous arm gestures, calling it in like some sort of kamikaze air controller. There's a loud flash, I disappear, and everything burns.

Being so qualitative, dysphoria is difficult to pin down exactly. A decent definition would be something like "intense unease in regards to (one's) gender," where gender is understood to include the entirety of sex, gender, and anatomy (since none exist outside of the discourses within which they are produced and they are all intimately interrelated). There is a tension, typically formulated as a contradiction between sex and gender, or between what one is, what one desires, and what one is not. Yet, a move away from positivity might help sidestep implicitly essentialist language while potentially opening up some new lines of thought.

Despair and hopelessness marks the quality of dysphoria, burning the border between the world and impossibility deep into me, making its omnipresence unbearably visible. Many othertypes of despair carry with it the seed of a hope that something possible (however unlikely) could fix the situation one despairs

within: the cancer might go away, this ugly breakup could always turn around and spontaneously become a deep and lasting love, I might win the lottery so I can stop being in crushing debt, Obama might bring meaning to my life. Dysphoria carries with it no such thing. While there are despairs that do not carry this hope, the intensity, duration, and scope of gender dysphoria suggests that it is worth analyzing.

This conflict between actual and impossible does not exist in a vacuum, but exists precisely because of the naming-constructing-creating that is this world. The world creates its own impossibilities by its incessant productive categorization, as nothing fits its own definition.

Everything is perpetually scratching at the walls, blindly, without any purpose. The intolerability that surrounds everything is also a graininess in everything. The border reveals itself as not one but two, a pair of overlapping shadows. The impossible existing and the longed-for nonexistent intersect here. While this graininess exists everywhere, dysphoria marks where this graininess comes into conflict with gender, and by extension the world and our constitution as subjects. Beyond not fitting the category we were assigned (I am not-this), it is our continually failing to be (I am not-that). This is where the rhetoric of the liberal transfeminist fails.

I wasn't born this way, and I can't ever be either. Not-this would imply that dysphoria has a similarity with despair, sharing the commonality of something else one could hope for. The not-that both stands in for and precludes that hope.

It is important to recognize that I am not talking about individuals, beliefs, choices, or actions here, but of a conflict that takes place between graininess and the

world within gender and manifesting itself through gender.

There is no revolutionary identity here, only an irreconcilable conflict against and through identity. This despair and this hatred is the result. Subsequently, identity-based attacks upon gender will not be able to collapse gender. My taking hormones or getting surgery or whatever is simply my performing the conflict by the lines of power that run through me. It does not follow that these things constitute an attack upon gender itself, although it may stimulate it to evolve in order to maintain its existence.

Through and against are distinguished by where (and thus how) the conflict takes place. These overlapping circles - the impossible existing and the nonexistent - produce one another endlessly, composing the topography of the world. I've gone over why the existing is impossible, but the status of nonexistent might be less obvious. The nonexistent is not something that can be acquired, but exists as the shadows and holes produced by the structuring of the world. It is not a way out. Yet, in the very foundation of this world lies its weakness, by the very fact of its own creating.

Not-this, not-that: negation at its heart. Nothing, the very same as the graininess that gives rise to the conflict. Nothing because it lacks categories, because it is the emptiness that overflows every name given to it. It cannot be put to work, it is always breaking down. It cannot be rendered tame, but it will explode in revolt. It exists in the spaces between the things, and in the heart of every thing.

It can never be contained. This Nothing attempts to destroy everything in its path. Looking at the negative responses dysphoria presents, I think a course of