

TRANS-TEMPORAL INTIMACY, OR, NEGATING TIME AS WE KNOW IT

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ABSTRACT

This article is an exploration of “trans-temporal intimacy” as a methodology, a sensibility, and a desire. Trans-temporal intimacy could be understood as a closeness, a proximity, an intimate engagement, a generative connection across time, and enacting this through epistemologies of sensuality, sexuality, affect and touch. Drawing on critical theorizations of time alongside queer, feminist understandings of affect, intimacy, and touch, I seek to uncover the radical potential of being intimate across temporal distinction. How might forming such relationships, in our research and beyond, encourage us to remain antagonistic towards hegemonic temporal regimes? If we treated temporality as another categorization that benefits the regimes of white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism which control us, then how might we go about dismantling its dividing character? Inspired by my relationship with the sonic archive of disappeared singer-songwriter Connie Converse, I aim to achieve this trans-temporal intimacy through the act of listening and being with sound. By responding to feminist articulations of embodiment and the erotic, I argue that the practice of listening offers a more radical sensory basis for critical archival engagement. Ultimately, this allows greater access to the radical forms of sociality and kinship made available through sound, including those which dissolve the notion of the individual self.

KEYWORDS

trans, temporality, intimacy, listening, affect, touch, relationality



Each time, I want to sing to that unbearable past, which also turns out to be the soundtrack to an open and more beautiful future (Singh 2019, 66).

Closeness

At the end and the start of it all is a dream of connecting with something, or someone. An affective pull towards some form of being with another, and the hope to do so despite occlusion. Some things feel impossible, too incommensurable to reckon with. But we are always looking beyond, towards new ways of being and doing through which we feel truly free and alive, even when all of us are not. So, I start with this impulse, to cross some kind of threshold. I sit with bodies (physical, theoretical, imaginary) and orient myself with and towards them (Ahmed 2006).

In this article, my problem is with time, or to be precise, straight/white/colonial/capitalist time: the temporal regime of racial capitalist modernity. As a researcher, but also as a person contending with my existence within this regime, I'm looking for ways out, methods for researching and living which allow us to be antagonistic towards the world that has been imposed upon us. I wonder: if we treat temporality, or rather normative temporal distinction, as another categorization that benefits the regimes of white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism which bind us, then how might we go about dismantling its divisions in our daily lives? In looking to futures beyond mere survival and towards genuine liberation, I posit that becoming close across the divisions of time, with those that live lives in excess of their present, brings us closer to radical futures.

This article is an exploration of 'trans-temporal intimacy' as a methodology, a sensibility, and a desire. Trans-temporal intimacy could be understood as a closeness, a proximity, an intimate engagement, a generative connection across time, and enacting this through epistemologies of sensuality, sexuality, affect and touch. To adopt a trans-temporally intimate approach is to use affect to search for such connections, to disregard temporal convention, and seek new coalitions which undermine the forces that divide you. Trans-temporal intimacy, as a queer methodology, *desires* these connections, desires their ability to insistently and imaginatively remember subjugated lives, and desires the alternative possibilities they lead us towards. Trans-temporal intimacy, then, is methodologically antagonistic towards time as we know it. It also functions as a loving gathering of ideas.

What I am calling “trans-temporal intimacy” is an orientation that is present across various disciplines: affect studies, queer theory, critical archival theory, sound studies, but exceeds them all in various ways. At its core, this might be said to be a feminist project of the imagination. We have many vernaculars, methods, memories, and affective processes to speak with the past. We speak with ghosts (Gordon 2011). We inhale dust and become feverish (Steedman 2019). We speak and we listen (Campt 2017). We touch across time (Dinshaw 1999). We situate ourselves “in the wake” (Sharpe 2016) and look for potential “in the break” (Moten 2003). We scavenge for scraps (Halberstam 2019) and ask what use they might have (Ahmed 2019).

Specifically, I’m thinking through the radical potentials of being intimate across temporality, of being intimate with people and things separated from us by temporal distinctions. What might it mean to actually form intimate relationships across time? Which alternative forms of kinship and relationality might these connections inspire? How do these intimate formations enlighten us about the small corners of experimentation found in non-normative life? And subsequently, what possible methods, frameworks and mediums might allow us to access these spaces more easily? What does it mean to look back to look forwards, in the here and now?

This project starts with the dream of genuine connection and ends with a conviction that connection creates space for liberation. I will begin with a discussion of temporality and its discontents, followed by interrogating the role of affect and sensation in temporal disruption. By highlighting listening as a particularly disruptive and antagonistic method for negating temporal division, I consider the radical potentials made available through affective methods which undermine the bounded, individual subject.

Connie

For the sake of honesty, and of citation, I want to say here that this whole concept started because I developed a relationship with Connie. Connie Converse was an enigmatic white woman born in 1924 in New Hampshire in a settler colony known as the United States. She liked to travel around and write songs. She was rumored, among other things, to be a member of the Communist Party, and a lesbian. Her music was not heard in a conventional sense. She rarely performed publicly, and the recordings we have of her music were not made for public hearing. What we have are relics recorded by her friend Gene Deitch onto a reel-to-reel tape recorder. One day in 1974, Connie placed her belongings into her Volkswagen Beetle and drove away. She was never heard from again.

After Deitch was invited onto a WNYC radio show in 2004 and played some of her songs, Connie's music began to reach a larger audience than it ever had previous to her disappearance. A compilation of these recordings, *How Sad, How Lovely*, was released in 2009. I can't recall how I first heard her, but she found her way into my waking dreams. I found moments of utopia in her strange sounds. In their beautiful, eerie descriptions of running away, of making home with the mountains and birds and flowers. In their bizarre fables and failed romances. In their longing for a kind of freedom, of forms of love which are unencumbered.

These recordings inadvertently create an affective archive. One which hints at the radical scraps of social life found through sound and music, in the ways her songs blend with the relational noise which surround them. Falling in love with this archive, with Connie, is why I am here writing about intimacy. I firmly believe that there is something here, in these relationships we are always making as researchers, and as queer people, that might guide us towards something genuinely radical.

My falling-for and desiring-of her sounds, and the aliveness they contain, guide my entire understanding of trans-temporal intimacy. Through this relationship I was encouraged to think intently about listening and its ability to traverse temporal distinctions and the separations between life and death, but also to deconstruct the temporal regimes and broader structures they constitute. What follows is an attempt to imagine beyond such regimes, and an encouragement for everyone to do the same.

Temporal Antagonism

What is the "tense" of a black feminist future? (Campt 2017, 17).

And how does one tell impossible stories? (Hartman 2008, 10).

It is my hope that trans-temporal intimacy might function as part of a multitude of practices which form what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney (2013) describe as "the general and generative antagonism" (17); a commitment to fugitive practices which refuse the world as it is. I highlight temporality as one of the key sites of violence restricting our lived possibilities not in isolation but as part of a long history of temporal resistance. The "white temporal regime" (Mills 2014, 31) of

modernity restricts imaginative possibilities, it disciplines and temporally compartmentalizes, becoming its own form of capitalist currency (Thompson 1967). Achille Mbembe (2015) describes colonization as a “fundamental negation of time” (n.p.), viewing this negation as threefold: that in colonization, colonized people were/are viewed as “radically located outside of time; or whose time was radically out of joint;” that any notion of the ‘future’ became “the monopoly of Europe and had to be brought to the natives from outside, as a magnanimous gift of civilization;” and that in the colonial mind, the colonized person “was ontologically incapable of change and therefore of creation” (n.p.). The temporal regime of colonial modernity is one which shapes understanding, valuing and disenfranchisement of “underdeveloped” peoples and geographies (Rodney 2018) by rendering colonized subjects as inherently “of the past” (Mignolo 2011).

Colonial time then presents an impossible bind, one which precludes any notion of otherwise, in the past or the future, than that imposed by colonization. It follows that any anticolonial project must encompass an antagonistic relationship towards time as we know it if we are to be able to truly imagine and conceive of an ‘otherwise.’ Denise Ferreira da Silva (2014) describes her ‘black Feminist Poethics’ as “an ethics, which, instead of the betterment of the World as we know it aims at its end” (82), one which requires “nothing less than decolonization” (85). In understanding that liberation can only be achieved by the end of the world, she highlights colonial temporality as something which must necessarily be destroyed to achieve this end. For Ferreira da Silva, “the World of Categories... is always already in Time, of Time” (87). ‘Time’ functions as another regime of colonial epistemology (90); a force which governs the imagination, and thus our potential for conceiving otherwise. Categories are understood as eternal, timeless, rather than specific historical constitutions. I follow Ferreira da Silva in seeking to imagine new possibilities for future existence by better understanding the excessive, antagonistic lives of the present by negating their categorization. Trans-temporal intimacy is an approach which refuses the categories of past, present and future in the same way it refuses other categories of existence which seek to restrict our methods of communication, knowing, and loving. By adopting or seeking a trans-temporal intimacy, we not only undermine the temporal divisions presented to us but allow ourselves to become closer to those lives which themselves have exceeded and continue to exceed normative temporal understandings.

If “white time becomes not merely a Euro-centered periodization, but a demarcator of the appropriate use of time, conceptions of daily rhythms of work and leisure, as opposed to the general misuse of time Europeans found elsewhere” (Mills 2014, 31), then how might fugitive temporal practices embrace this ‘general

misuse,' treating it instead as something to seek out? Indeed, certain forms of existence necessarily entail a rejection of hegemonic temporal desires, and I identify trans-temporal intimacy as a specifically queer rejection of temporality. As José Esteban Muñoz (2019) notes, "queerness's time is a stepping out of the linearity of straight time. Straight time is a self-naturalizing temporality. Straight time's 'presentness' needs to be phenomenologically questioned" (1). Following Muñoz, I want to think further about the queer potentials for temporal transgression; in moments of sexual and performative excess where time dissolves, but also in the queer lives which themselves reject "chrononormative" (Freeman 2010) understandings of progress and capitalist determination (Halberstam 2005). Here I want to dwell on where the "trans" fits into this "trans-temporal intimacy."

As well as its mere signification, or use as a prefix, it always hints at something more radical and dangerous. Trans life is conceived of and yet always exceeds normative temporal frameworks. In *The Terrible We*, Cameron Awkward-Rich (2022) draws our attention to the distorted temporality of trans experience: "despite the literal and metaphorical association of transition and transness itself with travel, mobility, and movement, trans life under racial capitalism is at least as much about stuckness, waiting, 'lag time,' and recurrence" (8). Trans lives throw into question aspirations for linear progress, known endpoints and completeness. Hil Malatino (2019) asks us "when is one 'post' transition?" (640) arguing that "'trans' names not a specific entity, but a process; it is not a noun, but an adjective" (644). Subsequently, Malatino calls to "focus on trans lives in interregnum, in the crucial and transformative moments between past and future, between the regime of what was and the promise of what might be" (644). Transness, then, denotes a space or moment radically open to change, one which contains ambivalence and is continually shaped by alternative possibility.

I'm particularly inspired by Awkward-Rich's attempt to realign struggles for trans and crip justice. In response to the pathologization and medical subjugation of trans experience, rather than distancing transness from disability by claiming that 'we are not sick,' movements for trans liberation should align themselves with crip struggles against the pathologizing model of wellness, and acknowledge the ways in which racial capitalism (Robinson 2021; Johnson and Lubin 2017) continues to deny possibility to those unable to 'perform well' in society.

Alison Kafer (2013) writes about the impossibility of futurity for disabled people in the eyes of the medical establishment. In the medical model, disability is constructed as something which denies the possibility of a 'good' life, where such a future can only be achieved through 'curing' which Kafer defines as "curative time." Kafer offers the alternative formation of "crip time." "crip time is flex time not just expanded but exploded... rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds" (27). Trans and disabled lives continuously throw into question our assumed desires for progress and development, precisely by behaving so badly within the logics of colonial, straight temporality. Fatigue prevents acceptable levels of productivity, life has to be taken each day at a time, predictability and replicability are unavailable. Bodies are misunderstood, read wrong in the street or in the doctor's office. They produce a double take. Time is sometimes painfully felt rather than imagined, measured in terms of access to medication.

The shared temporal antagonism of these writers shows to me that liberatory possibilities require a form of collapse. We want, and need, to destroy the world. This much is clear, even if it is slightly beyond the scope of this article. What I might ask, then, is how this ethos of antagonism and refusal of temporality might act as a way of beginning to negate the hold of the structures which rely upon it. And notably, how does a focus on temporality offer particular possibilities for coalition building? Without eliding specificities of struggle, what if we were to re-orient our focus around the particular forms of subjugation which normative time creates, noticing the multitudinous ways in which time categorizes and limits possibility? In doing so we might begin to negate this temporal regime, render it more and more obsolete.

In his conclusion to *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz (2019) writes: "we must vacate the here and now for a then and there. Individual transports are insufficient. We need to engage in a collective temporal distortion" (185). I'm asking us to take this demand seriously. By collectively distorting temporality, we are led leads to new forms of relationality and coalition building. We are encouraged to fuck with time, in better and more pleasurable ways. Indeed, there is much to be said about the affective aspect of looking back and looking forward. What are the affective, sensory, and emotional qualities of traversing and refusing temporal distinctions? To adopt a queer temporal or "archival sensibility" (Tamboukou 2019) asks what engaging with 'archives' (histories, lives...) might lead towards. Which new formations of queer life, queer love, and queer affective kinship might developing such temporal relationships bring about?

Thinking further about this ‘pull’ to escape the confines of temporality might allow us to access more expansive methods and potentials for accessing the revolutionary moments of mundanity. I hope to home in on the corporeal moments of desire and touch which lead us across temporal distinctions, what Tina Campt (2017) would refer to as “hapticality” (8). Thinking more about the embodied tug to move beyond the past, present and future becomes a question of desire. This is where trans-temporal intimacy comes into play.

Sensation

Being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience not as cold knowledge, but as a transformative recognition (Gordon 2011, 8).

In any relationship there is a first meeting. Sometimes these are unmemorable, you only realize your pull to them later on. But sometimes you are drawn against your will to someone or something. It enters into your life unexpectedly but stays with you, its meaning only becoming clear later on. Your body is overtaken by this affective response, with a need to somehow contextualize, comprehend or rationalize its feeling.

In *No Archive Will Restore You*, Julietta Singh (2019) deftly reconfigures archival theory by taking the body itself as a starting point, as the archive itself. This body-as-archive is a space of relationality, it becomes “a way of thinking-feeling the body’s unbounded relation to other bodies” (29). In conceptualizing the archive as embodied, Singh hints towards understanding the body as itself something only understood in its connection to other things, in the dissolution of its individualized boundaries. The archive, then, is always a thing of affective interaction, of what Singh calls “transformative touch” (105). I am less concerned with the ‘archive’ itself than how archival theory articulates the experience of being with the past, of remembering and recollecting, of research itself, of treating objects as catalysts for memories, for world-making, for insisting on having been there. It is in these spaces which breach the gap between selves that I find the most generative potential for the trans temporal intimacy I seek.

Much like Avery Gordon (2011), “my concern is unequivocally with social life” (27). But specifically, I want to collapse Singh and Gordon in upon each other. If it is the case that “if we want to study social life well... we must learn how to identify hauntings and reckon with ghosts” (Gordon 2011, 23), then I want to extend this notion of relationality across time (and across states of aliveness) into the realm of intimacy. This is where I look for trans-temporal intimacy. I’m wondering how this trans-temporal intimacy might be not just something to notice, but to actively seek out.

What exactly is it about being so proximate, and so affectively intertwined, that is really transformative? It is the potential for affective space to question that which is considered eternal or unchangeable in the world as we know it. Intimacy is literally space making, it opens up other possibilities and temporalities in the material and felt moments it creates. Elizabeth Povinelli (2006) writes that “all intimacies stretch between the actual and the possible, the long duration and the punctual, the singular and the general” (Povinelli 195). The late Lauren Berlant (1998) noted that intimacy “poses a question of scale that links the instability of individual lives to the trajectories of the collective” (283). What is captured by both of these observations is intimacy’s ability to destabilize, in particular, any sense of a thing in isolation. Not only does an individualized political project give way to a collective one, but the notion of an individual itself gives way to interaction and relationality. So, intimacy is what allows us to traverse and collapse disparate temporalities.

I’m thinking again of Connie Converse’s archive, her recordings. Maybe part of why they jumped out to me is their richness in ephemera, their overabundance of the body. The coughs and the stutters. The fragments of conversation before some of the songs. The background noise, the hums and crackles. The times when she plays the wrong note or sings the wrong verse. We have no idealized, individualized creative artefact, but rather sketches and assemblages of the various noises which surrounded her. In such small scraps I hear and feel so much, there is a palpable physicality to it all. They feature a completely different form of evidence, one which “evaporat[es] at the touch of those who would eliminate queer possibility” (Muñoz 1996, 6). It is precisely through attuning ourselves to these forgotten, marginal things where I believe trans-temporal intimacy can be accessed.

What might be tentatively called a ‘turn to the sensory’ (Ahmed 2019; Camp 2017; Cvetkovich 2019; Dinshaw 1999; Freeman 2010; Gordon 2011; Muñoz 1996; 2019; Singh 2019; Tamboukou 2019) in archival thought has a great deal of potential not just in changing the way we think about archives, but the way we engage with things, people, history, temporality, and the world more broadly, as queers and feminists. This is where I believe trans-temporal intimacy can be accessed. These

sensory interventions allow for methods to remain antagonistic: towards the colonial imaginations of the archive (Stoler 2009) and of temporality, towards what is considered significant, important and worthwhile to remember. The sensory occupies a different epistemological space to the rationally understood.

All bodily potentials—the sensory, the intuitive, the responsive—hearken back to Audre Lorde’s (2019) “Uses of the Erotic” and queer, black feminist theory more broadly: “Beyond the superficial, the considered phrase, ‘It feels right to me,’ acknowledges the strength of the erotic into a true knowledge, for what that means is the first and most powerful guiding light toward any understanding. [...] The erotic is the nurturer or nursemaid of all our deepest knowledge” (46). Lorde’s conception of the erotic taps into everything I also want to uncover in these affective moments of engagement across time: the radical potential of sensuality; the making of new forms of knowledge in moments of touch; the generative moments of intuition where we are overtaken by our bodily desires. The sensory interventions I’ve already discussed operate at these overlapping moments of sensuality and sexuality, unrestricted to either, articulating a more expansive model of sexuality than that provided by cis-hetero-patriarchy. I see engagements with the archive, with figures and things from the past (our transgressive coalition), as always-already within this world, in the space of touch, of pleasure, of desire, of falling in love. As well as acts, feelings, or things that happen to us, these are all frameworks to think through. Here we access new relationships and imaginations. What I am interested in are the methods and vehicles through which we find the spaces where we lose ourselves to affect. Where knowledge moves beyond the rational to the embodied.

Listening

Pondering the idea of the body archive, I cannot resist thinking toward those palpable bodily openings: the orifices. Those holes in our bodies where other bodies have unabashedly entered and left their deposits. Among other things, the body’s archive might be framed as an archive of penetration (Singh 2019, 32).

I want to consider listening as a form of archival engagement which might better allow us to access a trans-temporal intimacy. In my own research, I use listening as a way of accessing trans-temporal intimacy when engaging with sound archives of the disappeared or misremembered, which require unique method-

ological considerations. After all, listening is a practice which questions where bodies begin and end. It is always concerned with the openings and closings of bodies, where you engage actively with pleasure whilst choosing to let things happen to you. Regardless of its source of output, or the person experiencing it, sound is always experienced through the body as vibration, sensation and feeling. Listening is a sensory, affective and oftentimes sexual practice.

In *Listening to Images*, Camp (2017) treats listening not simply as a physical process but as a sensory modality. Camp finds the “quiet” or “unheard” to be the places filled with the most revolutionary potential, here specifically in the practices of black social life. In addition, Camp (2017) finds in listening an immense potential for engaging with the “haptic” aspects of archival engagement. Listening and sound are frameworks for getting to what is not immediately obvious: “the lower frequencies... register as what I describe as ‘felt sound’—sound that, like a hum, resonates in and as vibration... Yet all sound consists of more than what we hear. It is an inherently embodied modality constituted by vibration and contact” (7). So, in fact, listening for Camp is really a form of touch, potentially the “transformative touch” mentioned earlier.

I think through Camp’s work alongside one of the most radical articulations of a queer musicality—which I extend here to ‘being with sound’ more generally—Suzanne Cusick’s (2006) “On A Lesbian Relationship with Music”. In the text, Cusick radically conceives of a lesbian (sexual) orientation towards listening, playing and being with music. She defines sexuality as “a way of expressing and/or enacting relationships of intimacy through physical pleasure shared, accepted, or given” (70), subsequently questioning whether the boundaries between musicality and sexuality are really that concrete. For Cusick, both musicality and sexuality are concerned with power, giving, and receiving, and function as concurrent and mutually influencing practices. Among the richness of potential, I am thinking concurrently with Cusick’s belief in a queer musical and sonic orientation to access these spaces of transgression. I think there is a very palpable erotic and sexual possibility in the act of listening that might be able to access these radical moments of being. I return to Lorde (2019) on the erotic:

Another important way in which the erotic connection functions is the open and fearless underlining of my capacity for joy. In the way my body stretches to music and opens into response, hearkening to its deepest rhythms, so every level upon which I sense also opens to the erotically satisfying experience... That self-connection shared is a measure of the joy which I know myself to be capable of feeling, a reminder of my capacity for feeling (46-47).

What Lorde taps into here, and what I am trying to use listening as a means of describing, are the spaces where we lose ourselves to affect. Where knowledge moves beyond the rational to the embodied. In the moment, this knowledge comes through the vibrational experience of listening and dancing to music. This is what Cusick (2006) looks towards also—the potential for embodied musical experiences where the self-disintegrates into the other, be it another person, a sound, an instrument, an experience. I want to set listening as part of a wider lineage of affective experiences that move beyond the contained individual self into the realm of multiplicity.

What listening might offer, alongside other forms of intimate and sexual touch, is moments of dislocation from the world as it is. Listening at its core is the process of mediating vibrations between bodies. It is the affective in between that comes into existence precisely through relation. Listening is also paying attention to, caring for, and wanting to exist pleasurably with, other selves. If “we can conceptualize the researcher and the archive as an assemblage rather than as separate and independent entities” (Tamboukou 2019, n.p.) listening might function as the force pulling its things and selves into such an arrangement, that orients them in a certain way.

Elizabeth Freeman (2007) notes that “social change itself enables, and perhaps even requires, that incommensurate temporalities... rub up against one another, compete, overlap, cross reference” (499). Listening has the particular ability to place sounds from another historical moment, along with all their affective excess (the tape hiss, the movement of bodies) immediately into the ears of the present. For Brandon LaBelle (2021), “listening, as part of the work of attention, educates how the present is deeply effected and touched by its own limits, by what exceeds or has gone missing from the arena of the sensible” (7). Listening allows us to access the spaces ‘in between’ or ‘outside’ in our search for a radical trans-temporal intimacy. Listening as a methodology nurtures a trans-temporal intimacy by furthering this relationship between person and ‘affective thing’ through transduction, closeness and possibility. Which moments of queer potential might be made possible in these spaces in between? In this sense, we might conceive of an antagonistic archival listening practice that embraces the radical erotic potential it denotes.

Transformative Touch

I become ever more preoccupied with this notion of transformative touch between friends. With contact that cannot be reduced to the normative cultural paradigms – sexual and parental – of intimate touch. What kinds of touch live beyond these paradigms, making up dissenting communities (Singh 2019, 105).

To return to Connie, in listening to and developing a relationship with her archive, I don't feel as if I'm interacting with some nullified object. There is so much aliveness here. There is an unbridled agency which speaks to and moves me. And with this is a challenge to what it means to be dead and gone. For all we know, Connie is still alive, somewhere in the mountains making friends with the trees and the squirrels. Maybe she achieved what her songs lead us to believe was her dream: To escape. But even if not, she is still alive in the way her sounds find new ways to reach new ears every day. And by listening to her sonic descriptions and dreams of a different life, elsewhere, I am moved to imagine the same, for myself and for all. The act of listening, of developing such a relationship, is foundational in moving me to action.

I am concerned with these minute forms of revolution, or moments of world-making (Berlant and Warner 1995; 1998) which emerge briefly and almost incidentally within the lives of non-normative subjects simply trying to survive. Moments of unfolding where we become through our proximity to other people. Transformatively imagining. It is less about assessing whether they have changed the world, and more about finding hope in their promise. Trans-temporal intimacy, then, is a methodology for engagement which captures, lends itself towards and develops a relationship with these minute revolutions. Trans-temporal intimacy asks not simply what happened, but which forms of knowledge, loving and changing the world have been allowed to disappear, and how might we fall in love with them, for the first time or again and again?

We must find ways of being with each other that are better than what we have now. Beyond the categories that capitalism, white supremacy, and cis-hetero patriarchy impose upon our existence. Where are just free, to move and to love. It is my conviction that we find moments that do just this, in the world as it is, in the affective interactions between non-normative bodies which challenge the integrity of these bodies as isolated subjects. In the affective moments which galvanize us, allow us to question further, become more antagonistic, understand our

collective rather than individual power. A trans-temporal intimacy, then, is one which enacts this disintegration with a broader temporal scope, asking questions like, if we can abolish the individual, categorization, time as we know it, which other distinctions and regimes can we abolish?

Relationality

I am in love with the idea of partnering as a means of survival. (Abdurraqib 2022, 22).

What forging a trans-temporal intimacy might actually lead to, is a way of accessing a more radical and expansive form of kinship, a solidarity even, with those not deemed fully alive (Benjamin 2018). This kinship stems from a collective antagonism, and a commitment to always imagine otherwise (Olufemi 2021). Maybe this kinship provides a unique coalition which refuses the categories of existence rendered by racial capitalist modernity, instead becoming unified by our collective rejection of its temporal regime. This might take the form of intimate listening. It might take the form of organizing, of singing together, of falling in love. But what it understands is the categories we have to describe ourselves, and the ways in which we can touch and relate to each other in the world as it is, are not enough. Regardless of what we might call them, they are moments where the parties involved realize that their proximity is more powerful than their distance. It is clear that time as we know it has no place for us, and trans-temporal intimacy looks towards its abolition.

And so, I call upon you to listen carefully, next time that you do. When you are touched by something, follow that sensation. Dwell upon the feeling it contains. Let it bury itself deep within your body and escape again through your porous surfaces. And above all, recognize that in isolation we are nothing. That we are made by, with, and through, each other.

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