

Understanding Postgenderism: Studying *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* to Understand how the artists Fecal Matter and Salvia Perform as Postgenderists.

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This essay explores, the controversial, 2018 techno-feminist publication: *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* and uses it as a basis of understanding of the concept of post-genderism in order to investigate how, the visual artists, Fecal Matter and Salvia perform as postgenderists. Postgenderism is an extrapolation of ways that technology is eroding the biological, psychological and social role of gender, and an argument for why the erosion of binary gender will be liberatory (Dvorsky and Hughes, 2008, p2).

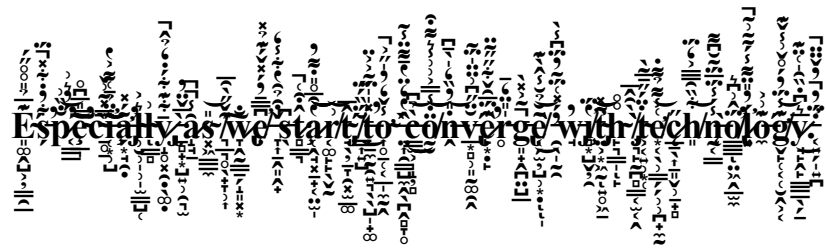
My practise is part of a collaborative and we define ourselves as cyborg artist / bionic people. Our work manifests through a frenzied displeasure of the sensualised female body in the digital and material realms. We are research based and use the creative output to analyse and probe our research as well as our audience. We work mainly digitally with the occasional performative element. We have been harnessing a body of work that focuses on a niche nook of history.

I feel it necessary to include both my individual voice and my collaborative voice, in this essay, to indicate how this research will affect all aspects of my practise. My collaborative practise takes up a huge part of my creative brain and so it is impossible for me not to acknowledge its opinion of my research and how it has been informed by it. In addition, I have used a third voice within my research of the artists Fecal Matter and Salvia. My reason for this being to accentuate the real-life identities of these beings, as well as artists, as something to be experienced by the reader of this text as an actuality for our future regarding gender. This voice takes form of a first contact report of Fecal Matter and Salvia to invite the reader to feel a proximity to said subjects.

I will analyse *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* as the most modern form of a technofeminist ideology with reference to earlier technofeminist literature and consideration of critiques from feminist writers: Annie Goh and Jules Joanne Gleeson. I will, additionally, examine, xenofeminist, Helen Hester's 2018 follow-up publication *Xenofeminism* to outline the core doctrine of xenofeminism. From this analysis I will have an understanding of the concept of post-genderism and alienation.

With this knowledge, I will look into the artists Fecal Matter and Salvia and how they perform as postgenderists, with acknowledgement of the study of gender and the Fashion Industry.

I would like my research project to allow me to understand my feminism. I am well aware that as a white cisgendered woman, my position is that of privilege compared to womxn of colour and non-binary people. I am becoming ever more conscious that I am part of a conversation when I talk about issues of inequality and would like to understand more about who I am addressing and who is involved



The Xenofeminist Manifesto is a publication of a 21st century feminist ideology with consideration of technology, by the international feminist group Laboria Cuboniks. *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* is a “multi-voiced project” (Bauer, 2017) with members of Laboria Cuboniks coming from a range of disciplinary backgrounds involving theoretical writing, code writing, visual arts, archaeology and artificial intelligence. Members include Diann Bauer, Katrina Burch, Lucca Fraser, Helen Hester, Amy Ireland, and Patricia Reed (Lewis, 2019, para 4). Laboria Cuboniks is an anagram of the pseudonym Nicholas Bourbaki: a pseudonym used by a group of early twentieth century revolutionary mathematicians (Jones, 2019, para 1). The group’s visual artist, Diann Bauer, eloquently defines the group’s position as ‘(an approach to) feminism frustrated by the need for its own existence’ (Bauer, 2017). Xenofeminism is their offering of an answer to the question of how to solve this.

Xenofeminism as described in its manifesto is “a politics for alienation” (Cuboniks, 2018, p5). This brief description of the concept of Xenofeminism can be understood to be referring to how concepts surrounding nature and the perceived unchangeable status quo are the driving forces behind inequalities associated with gender today. By alienating ourselves from nature and its limiting qualities, such as sexuality, disability and restrictions associated with pregnancy, we can extinguish the inequalities they produce. *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* states that the method of doing this would be to converge with the technological resources at our disposal, thereby defeating ‘nature’ and the plight it brings to us all.

Despite my admiration for the virtues of xenofeminism, the format in which they are presented in the manifesto is problematic. I will elaborate further on my appreciation for some elements of xenofeminism that I have understood from another publication. However, prior to this I will present my criticisms of *The Xenofeminist Manifesto*.

The Xenofeminist Manifesto has been praised as being the most progressive form of technofeminist literature compared to its predecessors: *The Cyborg Manifesto* by Donna Haraway and *Zeroes + Ones: Digital Women and the New Technoculture* by Sadie Plant. These earlier texts share the same principles of converging with technology to promote feminism but lack any recognition of transfeminism. As defined by a lead voice in transfeminist literature, Emi Koyama, transfeminism is “a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be intrinsically linked to the liberation of all women and beyond” (Koyama, 2001, p1). The *Xenofeminist Manifesto* does include references to transfeminism, by acknowledging the specific struggle of trans people in regards to damage that naturalism causes to them. Whilst this acknowledgement is good, it could be suggested that it is only credible in comparison to dated texts which are entirely ignorant to the concept of transfeminism. Something is not necessarily worthy of praise simply due to its difference to something deserving of none. Trans-revolutionary activism has been present since, at least, the Stonewall Riots of 1969 and literature referencing it predates the manifesto by at least 20 years (Bettcher and Stryker, 2016). Therefore, the mere acknowledgement of trans people in *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* is not sufficient enough to garner praise.

A further criticism of the xenofeminists could be that they favour the stylistic read of the manifesto over the actual intent of their philosophy. There is a moment in the manifesto where the authors exclaim “Let a hundred sexes bloom!” (Cuboniks, 2018, p55). This point is supposed to package their views on the abolition of gender effectively but instead comes across as clumsy as they misuse vocabulary in a conversation where correctness of vocabulary is paramount. One could compare this poor practice to the device of sophistry, whereby, they are declaring something that is not false but not accurate simply for the benefit of their perceived writing skills. This reinforces the notion that the xenofeminists have purposely designed this text to be over-complicated.

It is highly apparent that the prose and format of the manifesto is one which is inaccessible and not very inclusive of its audience. The xenofeminists use of overly elaborate vernacular and the pseudonym “Laboria Cuboniks” may be seen as a vice to disguise an unscrupulous philosophy. Acclaimed feminist blog writer and staunch critic of xenofeminism, Jules Joanne Gleeson, would agree. She claims that it was “not much of a surprise” to learn that the manifesto was written in a shared Google document, edited simultaneously from three continents and five time zones (Gleeson, 2019, para 9). It is hard to understand the appeal of ignoring the logic of making a text accessible to audiences and Laboria Cuboniks at least fall short to being clumsy in this respect. This point is made much more important when a piece of political prose is being written, I would argue, as its purpose is to persuade as many people of its stance, regardless of their prior knowledge to the subject matter. Furthermore, the

existence of a supplementary text to assist the reader in understanding the points of the manifesto displays a self-awareness to this problem.

One could argue that this is a strategy to create intrigue. By making it exclusive and inaccessible, it could be a vice to make people aware of it and want to understand it. Some examples of this would be the punk movement of the 70s and riotgrrrl movement of the early 90s, whereby being deliberately problematic is Sid Vicious, vocalist of 70s punk band the Sex Pistols, wearing a swastika was designed gain attention. Is the Xenofeminist's provocative prose similar to punk's flirtation with fascist imagery?

It is within this text that the tenets of xenofeminism I agree with are found, and I will now elaborate on said text.

Alongside *The Xenofeminist Manifesto*, I have delved into, Laboria Cuboniks member, Helen Hester's follow up text to the manifesto: *Xenofeminism*. This has assisted me in understanding more about her version of xenofeminism, as she explains that each of the six members of Laboria Cuboniks would likely emphasise different aspects of the manifesto based on their different professional backgrounds (Hester, 2018, p2). In the first chapter of the book she provides us with the explanations of the three main aspects of xenofeminism: technomaterialism, anti-naturalism and gender abolitionism. It is these three principles I find myself agreeing with and therefore makeup the valuable points of xenofeminism.

Could this be the stage two of the strategy? First alienate and intrigue and secondly explain?

Technomaterialism, is the idea that technology can be used to liberate us from societal oppression. An example of this is the militant filmmakers of the Guinea-Bassau War of

Independence, led by the revolution leader Amilcar Cabral. When Fidel Castro offered Cabral military support he declined and said “I need my nation to become teachers, doctors and filmmakers” (Cabral, quoted in McCarty, 2019). This would provide the people of Guinea-Bassau with education, healthcare and, of course in this pre-internet era, control of the media. However, as it stands, in our capitalist society, different levels of advanced technology are available to specific strata and therefore is controlled by those at the top with the most wealth and resources. The xenofeminists then proclaim that “any emancipatory technofeminism must take the form of a concerted political intervention, sensitive to the fused character of the structures of oppression that make up our material worlds” (Hester, 2018, p11). Here lies what separates xenofeminism from other forms of feminism. They have observed that technology is a necessary component for revolution as it possesses the emancipatory qualities vital for the liberation from the bounds of nature. Just as Cabral was insistent on the value of technology (filmmaking) in liberating the people of Guinea-Bassau, Hester is insistent on the value of technology when liberating those affected by the glorification of nature.

So, why does Hester suggest we must be liberated from our biology? It is Hester’s view that the fixed nature of our biology is responsible for the inequalities we all experience. This view is referred to as anti-naturalism. Anti-naturalism is a refusal to accept that our biology is fixed and the belief that we can use science and technology as an intervention to extend human freedom (Hester, 2018, p12). She states here, the inequalities associated with nature can be extinguished if we are to deny the impenetrable essence of it. Therefore, pursuing methods of dismantling the confines of nature is vital if we are to tackle inequalities within gender, sex classification, sexuality and physical ability.

Hester’s take on gender-abolitionism is a way in which anti-naturalism can be exhibited. She claims xenofeminism demands that the “tenacious binary thinking” of society be exorcised via extracting gendered qualities from their biological association with the binary. This extraction would, thus, make them available to anyone regardless of biology. What must be understood clearly here, is that the xenofeminists do not propose eradicating gendered attributes altogether, instead advocating for their availability to all.

I feel obliged to acknowledge a particular attitude Hester conveys in her book, regarding gender-abolitionism and the trans community. Hester proposes that transgenderism xenofeminism may not be entirely compatible. She suggests that the intrinsic link between one’s identity as being transgender and the observation of the gender binary, as being a state that we can’t control, goes against the malleable nature of gender believed by xenofeminism. As transgender people experience being on side A of the gender binary when they want to be on side B of it, they are engaging in the language games of the gender binary thus enforcing its existence. This I believe to be a misunderstanding of transgenderism. Transitioning from male to female, or vice versa, is not excluding the existence of other gender identities on the gender spectrum, for example, non-binary or gender fluid. This is far from at odds with xenofeminism, therefore, as I have shown that both sides can advocate for the abolition of the gender binary.

In order to understand *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* a little more, and my opinion of it, I read the critique *Appropriating the Alien: A Critique of Xenofeminism* by, feminist writer, Annie Goh published on the website MetaMute.org.

Now, within Goh's critique, she fixates on Laboria Cubonik's questionable use of the prefix "xeno", from the Greek "xenos" meaning stranger or guest (Oxford, 2019), most commonly seen in the word "xenophobia". She highlights the overuse of the prefix "xeno" by the controversial right-accelerationist and xenophobic Nick Land and the unclear association or disassociation of the xenofeminists to Land.

When first reading the manifesto, we noticed the use of the prefix and wondered whether it was purposely used to suggest the inclusion of race issues within the book; however, upon further reading, it didn't and the use of the prefix is still somewhat of a question mark to us.

Goh's main criticism of the manifesto is continuous use of the terms "we" and "us" combined with the prefix "xeno", which does imply a degree of intersectionality, yet it isn't exercised in the feminist ideology that follows. Goh claims "the 'xeno' of xenofeminism uses alienness univocally and performs the marginalised position of 'being alienated' whilst it elides the differences implicated in the dynamics of marginalisation" (Goh, 2019, para 18). I would agree with this as I did observe that the xenofeminists adopt the voice of a marginalised group to exploit the attention this demands whilst disregarding the truly marginalised voices, such as people of colour. Subsequently, in order for them to be worthy of the classification of being marginalised, they must incorporate the interests of all marginalised groups. This would avoid accusation of merely offering up a façade of being truly marginalised.

We think the importance of acknowledging these marginalised voices should be a priority for the xenofeminists, rather than any possible shock tactics.

Posted on Metamute.org, the aforementioned Jules Joanne Gleeson's response to Annie Goh's critique of *The Xenofeminist Manifesto: Breakthroughs & Bait: On Xenofeminism & Alienation* is a further source I mined for an understanding of xenofeminism.

Gleeson is quick to highlight that the Landian use of the prefix “xeno” by Laboria Cuboniks is little to be concerned about as the xenofeminists appear to be as equally informed by the secular humanism of the New Atheist movement as they are Nick Land. Branding xenofeminism “crypto-humanism” (A concealed effort to suggest that all forms of human behaviour are either biological or low forms of interaction). Gleeson explains how its use of the term “meme” (not just this but “memetic parasites” (Cuboniks, 2018, p49), to describe such things as “ethics” and “privilege checking”, draws directly from the likes of outspoken, evolutionary biologist, Richard Dawkins. Paired with a viral metaphor (‘infectious’, ‘host’), the xenofeminists appear to be uncomfortably implying a similarity between ethics, the principles that govern a person's behaviour (Oxford, 2019) and that of a parasite-like social nonsense. This is yet another criticism that I sympathise with, as it further demonstrates that the text masquerades as a political piece. To brandish ethics as it does whilst also supposedly being a political text is contradictory due to the intrinsic link between ethics and politics. Yet again, this could be seen as an attempt to be provocative rather than a credible voice with substantial principles on feminism.

I now see it fit to summarise my exploration of xenofeminism, and gather my views on it into one concise area. Following the presentation of what xenofeminism is I delved into some criticisms regarding its vessel- *The Xenofeminist Manifesto*. The first criticism focussed on its mislabelling of being progressive in regards to transgenderism. This was made clear by showing that in order for it to deserve praise, the bar for praise must be unacceptably low. I then put forward two criticisms surrounding the format of the manifesto itself. I exposed it as being too complex and unsuitable for a piece of political literature. I then addressed Hester’s further explanation of the manifesto, which I found to be a much better way of conveying the principles of xenofeminism, in its clear three-pronged approach; which I will adopt next in this essay to analyse the artists Fecal Matter and Salvia. However, I did highlight Hester’s lack of understanding of transgenderism; my one criticism of her solo publication. Finally, I looked at two critiques by Goh and Gleeson respectively, and detailed how I agreed with their thoughts on xenofeminism.

Our concluding thoughts would therefore be that whilst Hester's reformatting of Xenofeminism provides us with principles that are easily understood and very attractive in their views on advancing feminism by converging humans with technology, the original manifesto is greatly flawed. It is convoluted in its format, focussing on its style as opposed to its substance which seems illogical when one is proposing the groundwork for a revolution. Similarly, the presentation of its ideas seems to be shrouded in an attempt to be provocative which is again questionable.

~~when taking into account the proposed purpose of the piece~~

Report One

They have slender frames; covered in milky, hairless tissue. They have a human-like figure with a head and a main torso: off of which sprout two upper appendages and two lower appendages. They often take a human stature and stand upright on their lower appendages but have also been known to move around on all four, like animals. Situated at the end of their upper appendages are hands, which appear and function like human hands. They can be seen holding objects like handbags or dildos. At the end of the lower appendages are feet. Now, unlike their hands, their feet differ slightly from that of a human. At the tip are five toes, all familiar. However, just below the ankle, is a protuberance. Like an extension of the heel, made of chitinous tissue, meaning their foot is shaped somewhat like a crab's pincer -

~~(on Alexander McQueen's Armadillo boot from his S/S 2010 show Plato Atlantis)~~

They appear to have no external genitalia, whether they follow Earth's pattern of binary sex creatures is subsequently unknown. However, in figure 1, both entities can be seen participating in an act whereby the large facial orifices of the two beings are connected by a singular muscular tentacle. This act could be concluded as for pleasure/for reproductive purposes/both. In addition, in figure 2, both entities can be seen to rear offspring.

They are known as Fecal Matter.

Fecal Matter frequently engage in the human concept of fashion and can be described as particularly high fashion; expensive and forward thinking. They iterate elements of traditional high-fashion such as long, ornate gowns and materials like fur, with direct inspiration from style icons like Marilyn Monroe (figure 3). They combine this with the use of materials such as metal and plastic; black, white and silver colour schemes and the inclusion of medical/scientific equipment like neck braces, plastic tubes and oxygen masks. I will refer to this as cyber futurism.

Both beings can often be seen wearing similar clothing. More often than not, they are both wearing oversized, platform, high heeled shoes. Example shown in figure 4. Heels are a quintessential component of female contemporary fashion. It is known that they alter the gait (walk) of the wearer so that they move more with their hips when they walk. Substantial movement of the hips whilst walking is a strong trait amongst biological females, whereas biological males are found to move more with their shoulders and upper body. Psychological studies have concluded that this stereotypically female walk has been identified as more sexually attractive (Morris et al., 2013, para 1). Therefore, high heels exaggerate the sex-specific aspects of the female walk and are hence worn by females to enhance their sexual attractiveness or by males to create a female illusion. Thus, meaning

that the large, oversized heels worn regularly by Fecal Matter are an exaggerated performance of feminine gender.

Fecal Matter frequently wear dresses that are characteristically designed to accentuate the idealised female form – an “hourglass” figure. These styles include dresses that are synched at the waist or have large ballooned skirts, reminiscent of a style pioneered by Christian Dior in the post-war 40s (see figure 5). This style exaggerates the wearer’s hips and makes the waist appear more petite. Consequently, we can see that Fecal Matter are performing the feminine gender because of their exaggeration of the female form via their clothing.

The exposure of the skin, particularly of the chest and shoulders, is yet another trait of feminine high fashion that is exhibited by Fecal Matter. In figure 6, we can see them dressed in minimal, torn garments with a lot of exposed skin. Danish historian, Jenny Jochens, explains that clothes are “important markers of gender”, that they highlight “the most apparent sexual distinctions in between men and women’s bodies” (Jochens, 1991, p7). In this case, the exposing of the chest and shoulder region would reveal a slither build of an idealised female figure, compared to the broadness of the archetypal male form. Additionally, it would reveal the presence of mammary glands. Furthermore, the exposure of skin remains a feature of feminine fashion because of the sexual connotations of a revealed femme body. This idea is presented in the 1995 coming of age film *Clueless*: “Sometimes you have to show a little skin. This reminds boys of being naked, and then they think of sex” (*Clueless*, 1995). We humans are brought up with this idea of exposure of the body as a vice that females can use to heighten their sexual attractiveness. This is contradictory to the fact that people can expose their bodies of their own free will without it being for sexual purposes but that is something that a large portion of the human population is only beginning to comprehend and is ritual that the fashion industry still promotes. Understanding this, we can observe that Fecal Matter are practising this ritual of exposed skin to perform the feminine gender.

We, as humans, have learnt gender performativity as intrinsically linked to biological sex. From this observation of Fecal Matter we can see that there is no evidence of them following Earth’s binary sex pattern. However, they utilise our knowledge of feminine fashion rituals – the high heels, synched dresses and exposed skin – to perform an exaggerated feminine gender. Fecal Matter are performing human gender as non-humans. They are not performing gender based on binary sex, removing any direct links between biological sex and gender. By adopting human gendered qualities without falling into the binary, it is clear that they are a species of gender-abolitionists. This is directly supportive of xenofeminism’s post-gender philosophy.

Fecal Matter, as non-binary beings, can be seen wearing BDSM style clothing. These include their ‘gag heels’ (heels which incorporate a gag sex toy, as seen in figure 7, bondage belted clothing (figure 8), mouth opening face braces (figure 9) and dildo bags (figure 10). With the aid of this attire, they evoke the sense that they are dominators. In addition to this, they present themselves in a powerful way in their photographs which they upload to their social media platform, Instagram. They stand with a power stance; legs shoulder width apart, arms back and head tilted high. They use specific camera angles to make themselves appear really big, as seen

in figure 11. All of these elements demand our attention. This presentation of non-binary beings as powerful and dominating on the social media platform, Instagram, is evidence of Fecal Matter using the technology at their disposal, otherwise known as technomaterialism. They are utilising technomaterialism to promote their existence as gender-abolitionists which strictly follows Laboria Cuboniks' xenofeminist, postgender doctrine.

In an interview for I-d magazine, Fecal Matter explain their objective as artists: "We want to provoke Instagram and all of its conformist ways" (Fecal Matter quoted in Weinstock, 2018, para 2). On a base level read, this statement can be understood as a desire to combat normative beauty ideals which exist in real life and are heightened through social media. However, once analysed through the lens of postgenderism we can see that it is unequivocally supportive of Laboria Cuboniks' manifesto. The manifesto reads: "If 'cyberspace' once offered the promise of escaping the structures of essentialist identity categories, the climate of contemporary social media has swung forcefully in the other direction, and has become a theatre where these prostrations to identity are performed" (Cuboniks, 2018, p47). Here the xenofeminists explain that the potential for the digital realm, to be used as a space to break through conventions of identity, has been tainted by the exponential use of social media to promote the identities and existences of the privileged. This has been identified also by Fecal Matter in their focus specifically on the platform of Instagram. The xenofeminists go on to declare "we want neither clean hands or beautiful souls...we want superior forms of corruption" (Cuboniks, 2018, p47). This explains their rejection of conventional beauty that exists on digital platforms and that they desire something to intersect it; which is the mantra of the art that Fecal Matter practise.

Fecal Matter are an artist duo from Canada, comprising of Steven Raj Bhaskaran and Hannah Rose Dalton. The pair use fashion, makeup and digital image manipulation to change their appearance from something that resembles a human to something that doesn't. Bhaskaran identifies as gender non-binary: a thinker, a teacher and a transhuman (Weinstock, 2018, para 1). Dalton describes them self as an activist and an alien (Weinstock, 2018, para 1). The use of the word activist implies that their art is more than aesthetic but is functional. That it acts as a tool for change.

Report two

Its flesh is thin, rubbery yet smooth to touch. It has a chalky complexion. It has a spindling structure, somewhat fragile-looking. This creature is moderately human-like on first appearance. It has a head and a main torso and often has two upper and two lower appendages that resemble human limbs (figure 12). But see, its physique differs from one sighting to the next. In figure 13, its upper appendages obtain a wing structure covered in feathers and its lower appendages end with a taloned foot. In figure 14, it can be seen to have a complete apodous form and thick, bulbous skin, similar to larvae anatomy. Transmutation. This is evidence for speculation that this creature is supernatural. Its face has the structure of

human conventional beauty; symmetrical features, prominent cheekbones, large eyes. Its eyes are mostly entirely black. Sometimes they are entirely red. The reason for this is unknown. It has long peroxide blonde hair with a high hairline. It has no apparent external genitalia, whether it follows Earth's pattern of binary sex creatures is subsequently unknown. In figure 15, however, it can be seen to have transmuted. It has four heads connected by a four-pronged outgrowth from the facial orifices. There is conjecture that this is an observation of the creature performing asexual reproduction.

Its name is Salvia.

Salvia has long blonde hair, a fetishised quality of an archetypal human woman and quite unusual for an otherworldly being. Paired with their perfectly structured face, it appears Salvia is conforming to human, female conventional beauty. Salvia can often be seen wearing dresses. In figure 16, you can see them clothed in a gown made up of lace and brocade material, twinned with a bonnet on their head. This is reminiscent of Victorian era feminine fashion, an era where women were seen as less powerful, subservient beings. In figure 17, you can see them wearing a lace negligée. These are traditionally worn by women and is a sexualised item of nightwear. By wearing this, Salvia evokes the sexually submissive being that women are perceived to be when adorned in this attire. The assemblage of the conventional feminine hair and clothing rituals shows us how Salvia is performing an archetypal, ultra-female gender.

Salvia often sports large alien, strap-on dildos. These sex toys, as seen in figure 18, are used in BDSM sexual activities whereby Salvia would be the dominant member. In our human, heteronormative society (where being heterosexual is the norm), the dominant figure evokes masculinity. In figure 19, Salvia can be seen with an extremely muscular physique. Extremely muscular physiques are seen as the height of attractiveness for males in our society. Salvia is presenting themselves as masculine and dominant using the combination of this physique and the strap-on dildo. This is a performance of the male gender.

Similarly, to Fecal Matter, Salvia is performing human gender as a non-human and not based on binary sex. Their performance of the genders male and female, without falling into a gender binary, is a practise of the gender-abolitionism, proposed by the xenofeminists.

“I have problems with gender dysphoria and this has pushed me to distorting my appearance because it's more comfortable for me to confuse people about my gender than have people see me as male” (Salvia in Weinstock, 2017, para 9) explains Salvia in an interview for I-d magazine. Salvia is a 19-year-old transgender girl from North Wales (Perdue, 2018, para 2). This quote from Salvia expresses her need to reject her biology due to her gender dysphoria, which is not wholly recognised by society. Therefore, the alienation she feels due to this has driven her to express this alien-ness.

Salvia uses photo editing technologies to transform her visual biology. She often combines natural things, such as animal anatomies, to her own to create something that is unnatural. In figure 20, you can observe that she has digitally replaced her legs with that of a deer and in

figure 21 she has replaced her legs with a tail similar to that of an eel. In doing this, she has created a visual “conscious intervention” (Hester, 2018, p12) with nature that Laboria Cuboniks explain can be achieved with technology and science, otherwise known as anti-naturalism. By using photo editing technologies, Salvia is showing how this can be achieved via technomaterialism.

Fecal Matter and Salvia have expressed how society’s attitude towards their gender identities of non-binary and transgender, respectively, makes them feel alienated. They have cleverly used this alien masquerade of costume, makeup and careful technological editing to visually create this alien-ness. Doing so they have used technology to adapt their visual selves (technomaterialism); altering their biology (anti-naturalism) which is eroding our human construct of binary gender (gender-abolitionism).

The Xenofeminist Manifesto recognises this alienation of individuals due to their gender, sexuality, race or disability. *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* adopts this alienation as it’s identity by using the prefix “xeno” without addressing the distinct differences implicated by degrees of marginalisation. Thus, capitalising on the attention this would bring to xenofeminism without genuinely being an intersectional technofeminism.

In light of this, we must admit that Fecal Matter and Salvia better embody the principles of postgenderism than Laboria Cuboniks. Their alienation comes from an authentic place of struggle whilst distinctly practising every element of a postgender politics.

I feel this is an appropriate place to round up this discussion. I have explored *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* and the supporting publication *Xenofeminism* to help me understand exactly what a postgender philosophy is. I found it consisted of three aspects: technomaterialism, anti-naturalism and gender-abolitionism. Using my first contact report, I then described everything we can gain visually from both artists, Fecal Matter and Salvia, and defined them in regards to gender. Following that, I applied the three elements of Postgenderism that I have learnt from xenofeminism. I identified that Fecal Matter and Salvia use the technology at their disposal (technomaterialism) to deny and visually alter their biology (anti-naturalism). Furthermore, they use our knowledge of human gendered qualities and rituals to perform these as non-binary, non-human beings which erodes our concept of a gender binary (gender-abolitionism). This is how they perform as postgenderists. Alongside this research, I have included the voice of my collaborative practise to show exactly how my research has informed this practise.

It seems inappropriate to us to try and conclude here. How will postgenderism be accepted by the masses? Do the xenofeminists have ways in which we can begin to converge ourselves with technology? How long until we are more machine than we are biology? We want these questions answered. We think the next step should take form of a formulation of ways to alter and enhance our bodies that are accessible to everyone regardless of class, race, sex or gender. There is no benefit of creating a means of equality that is inaccessible. This conversation is only just starting and we are only just getting involved.

Image List

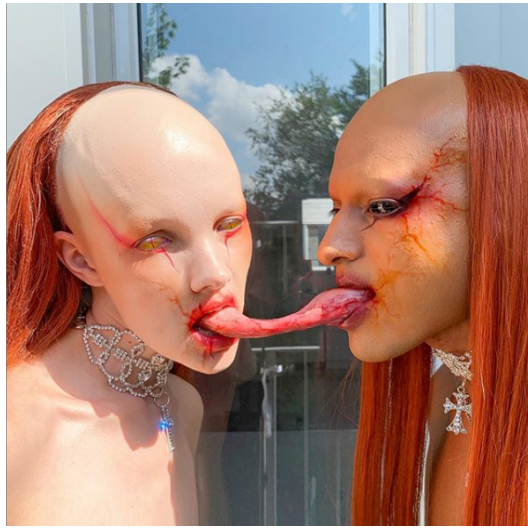


Figure 1

Fecal Matter

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 2

Fecal Matter

2018

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 3

Fecal Matter

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing. Found Image.

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 4

Fecal Matter

2018

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 5

Fecal Matter

2017

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 6

Fecal Matter

2018

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 7

Fecal Matter

Gag Heel

2019

Look 6 of “VOID” Capsule Collection

Leather shoe, plastic sex toy and metal

<https://www.instagram.com/fecalmatterworld/>



Figure 8

Fecal Matter

2018

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>



Figure 9

Fecal Matter

Facetox Harness

2019

Look 009 of “VOID” Capsule Collection

Leather and Metal

<https://www.instagram.com/fecalmatterworld/>

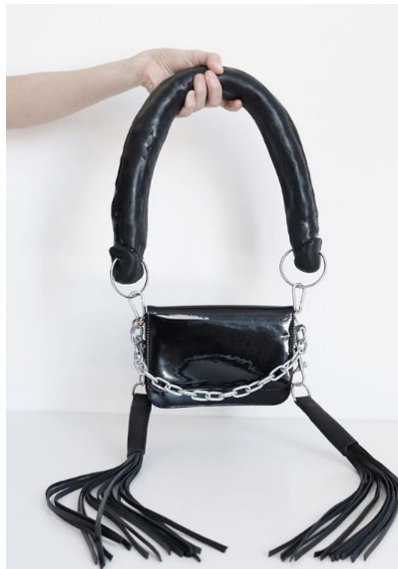


Figure 10

BBC Dick Bag

Look 008 of “VOID” Capsule Collection

Leather, silicone and metal

<https://www.instagram.com/fecalmatterworld/>



Figure 11

Fecal Matter

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/matieresfecales/>

Figure 12



Salvia

2020

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 13

Salvia

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 14

Salvia

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 15

Salvia

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 16

Salvia

2017

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 17

Salvia

2018

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 18

Salvia

2018

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 19

Salvia

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 20

Salvia

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/salvjia/>



Figure 21

Salvia

2019

Costume, makeup and digital editing

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BvIJsJknE-A/>

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