MOBILE AFFECTS, OPEN SECRETS, AND GLOBAL ILLIQUIDITY: POCKETS, POOLS, AND PLASMA

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Abstract

This essay will take up Deleuze and Guattari's allusive yet insightful writings on 'the secret' by considering the secret across three intermingling registers or modulations: as content (secret), as form (secrecy), and as expression (secretion). Setting the secret in relation to evolving modes of technological mediation and sociality as respectively pocket, pooling, and plasma, the essay works through a trio of examples in order to understand the contemporary movements of secrets: the memories of secrets evoked in an intimately interactive music video by the band Arcade Fire (as an example of 'pocket'), the movements of secrecy turned fabulative in the scopic-doublings of airport full-body scanners (as 'pooling'), and, most of all, the collective secretions that come to saturate and stretch around the globe as expressed by liquidity-seeking financial innovations (providing an angle onto 'plasma'). These three instantiations of contemporary secrecy are framed by a discussion of Julian Assange of WikiLeaks and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook – truly, a couple for our age: each intent, in their own way, upon bringing an end to secrets. Throughout, we try to maintain close attention to the emerging rhythms and dissonances that engage secrecy in a dance between the half-voluntary and the half-enforced.

... we're rapidly approaching an era of half-voluntary and half-enforced secrecy, the dawn of a desire that is, among other things, political. (Deleuze, 1995: 9)

Coin Flip

By the end of 2010, Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and WikiLeaks' Julian Assange were consistently presented across various US media outlets as occupying morally opposite sides of the same social media coin. The typical media narrative offered Zuckerberg as someone driven by two seemingly transparent, intertwining motives: 'to connect' and 'to profit'. Never mind that such allegedly benign motives were almost always thrown slightly off-kilter by Zuckerberg's own personal appearances in the media as well as the Oscar-nominated filmic impersonation of him by Jesse Eisenberg in *The Social Network*. The film's disarming blend of nerdboy public awkwardness and a naïf's airy obliviousness to the world of financial machinations only added to the ambiguity of the media's mash-up. Meanwhile, Assange, as framed by news coverage, was understood as operating by dual motives both opaque and more than vaguely sinister – to disrupt the smooth surface-politesse of global-political and economic discourse and to penetrate into those highly secret places where access was expressly forbidden. Pick a side. Place your bets. But the coin-toss was always weighted – the inwardly-directed wisp with the desire-to-connect and an incidental but spectacular capacity-to-profit resided on the coin's face while the shady infowarrior/pervert with the outsized-ego and the will-to-expose took up residence on the coin's much darker flipside. When *Time* magazine debated their 'Person of the Year' for 2010 it was not exactly a surprise when the coin landed heads up since, as they explain, although 'a great deal can be said about Assange', much of it is 'unpleasant' (Gellman, 2010). And this despite the fact that Assange topped the online readers' choice' poll (while Zuckerberg placed tenth).

But a Christmas holiday 2010 skit from *Saturday Night Live* betrays the sheer simplicity of this two-faced conceit. Clearly borrowing from the media's caricatures for each man, the late night satire begins with 'Mark Zuckerberg' (SNL's Andy Samberg doubling-down on Eisenberg's *Social Network* Zuckerberg) in the midst of a dull, no-

frills webcast accepting *Time* magazine's honour when suddenly his innocuous on-line transmission is interrupted by a far more ominous one from 'Julian Assange' (featuring sketchplayer Bill Hader in the role of Assange-as-fiendish-mastermind). Sipping a glass of brandy and speaking from a leather armchair in what looks like an upscale villain's lair, SNL's 'Assange' snidely congratulates *Time* magazine for 'discovering Facebook only weeks before your grandmother did', before launching into his own assessment of the differences between Zuckerberg and himself:

> I give you private information *on* corporations for free, and *I'm* a villain. Mark Zuckerberg gives your private information *to* corporations for money and *he's* Man of the Year. Thanks to WikiLeaks you can see how corrupt governments operate in the shadows and lie to those who elect them. Thanks to Facebook you can finally figure out which 'Sex in the City' character you are.

Soon after these words, 'Assange' allows his hacked signal to revert momentarily back to 'Zuckerberg's' message, fuzzing in as the FB founder flatly enthuses, in his familiarly uncomfortable way, about Facebook's 'algorithms for fun'. The intercepted transmission then returns to 'Assange' for his own cheery Christmas send-off – 'Here's a status update: "Democracy is dead". Happy Holidays!'

While we will not tarry very much longer over the A-to-Z's of this particular media tale, their example does serve to highlight some of the affective dynamics at work in and around the rhythms of public intimacies and revelations that will prove central to this essay. Mostly, we are curious about the playing-out of half-enforced/half-voluntary secrecy in its relation to ever-increasing technologically-mediated capacities for connectedness (as well as breaks in connection) and in evolving modes of (financially) mediated sociality: at once intimately cozy and immensely impersonal, simultaneously transparent and opaque. Here it is Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's little discussed writings on the secret (across three registers as secret, secrecy, and secretion) – especially in Chapters 8 and 10 of *A Thousand Plateaus* and in the final chapter ('Many Politics') of Deleuze and Parnet's *Dialogues* – that will guide us through what we are calling the pockets, pools, and plasma of the contemporary movements of secrecy.

Deleuze and Guattari's topology of the secret develops across three overlapping modes or, better, three affectual modulations:

1) secret = as content; an affective point-of-contact as a perceptual (often apperceptual) impingement/encounter/segmentation of relatively bounded, private, or seemingly intimate experience with the secretive: secrets that then can slide into pockets or come to feel, in themselves, like a pocket or folded interiority, sometimes fitting easily into the palm of a hand or serving as a mobile envelopment that can thus act to elaborate or curtail the (in)dividual fluctuations of bodies, matter, and memories (perhaps not unlike what Peter Sloterdijk has referred to as "interfacial spheres of intimacy" or "bubbles" [2011: 139]) or what MoveOn.org board president Eli Pariser describes as "filter bubbles" (2011) – our very own, invisibly- and algorithmically-modulated information universes),

2) secrecy = as form; shifting lines of affectual variation and setting of thresholds in the changing parameters of intimacy and revelation, not so much 'private secrets' (as above) but, more so, shared or 'open secrets': emanations & exposures, subtle shadings of gossip, rumors, stage whispers, confidences kept/broken. Essentially, with 'secrecy', secrets are bundled alongside their multiple tendings and public/private dove-tailings; 'secrecy' is when a secret is inextricably enmeshed with its virtual or potential(izing) puddlings and poolings (which is most of the time), and,

3) secretion = as expression; by no means last or least but, if anything, before and immanently beneath the first two modulations, what Deleuze calls the 'secret capillarity' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987: 139) – 'where the fluxes are combined, where thresholds reach a point of adjacency and rupture' (1987: 144). Secret as secretion acts as an always to-be-determined, unfolding plane of immanence or consistency conditioning the contents and forms of the first two modes/modulations (secret and secrecy) in a sort of roughhewn aggregate of turbulent, open-ended suspension, sometimes surveying or managing (often badly mismanaging) their ebbs and oozings of publicity and opacity:

'whatever the finalities or results, the secret has a way of spreading that is in turn shrouded in secrecy. The secret as secretion. The secret must sneak, insert, or introduce itself into the arena of public forms; it must pressure them and prod known subjects into action' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 287).

After exploring this multiple ontology of the secret more closely in the next section, our essay will sketch three manifestations of these intermingling modes or modulations via a set of representative examples in order to catch a glimpse of these movements at the intersections of publicity and secrecy: the memories of secrets evoked in an intimately interactive online music video (as an example of 'pocket'), the movements of secrecy turned fabulative in the reciprocally determining scopic-doublings of airport full-body scanners (as 'pooling'), and, finally, the collective and often clandestine secretions that come to saturate and stretch around the globe as borne along by highly leveraged liquidity-seeking financial markets drawing sustenance from credit-money's capacity to generate – *ex nihilo* – flows of 'infinite debt' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 237), and, thereby, providing one angle onto 'plasma'.

 It is a difficult, almost contradictory task, we must admit, trying to get to what may be hidden and what can be rendered transparent about the operation of secrets. While this is an era of pervasive social media and non-human protocological control mechanisms – when secrets are, almost by default, half-voluntary and half-enforced, the secret's ontology has forever resided in a kind of half-light: always partly dimmed or obscured, always partly open or exposed, and often enlisted to perpetuate the illusions, fantasies, and visceralities of power. As Simmel points out in his reflections on secrets and secret societies, secrecy 'throws a shadow over all that is deep and significant' and out of secrecy grows 'the logically fallacious, but typical, error, that everything secret is something essential and significant' (Simmel, 1906: 465). The very existence of secrecy (as 'form') as a known public entity – regardless of whether or not the secret (as a particular 'content') is actually 'known' – acts, as Simmel famously maintained, to magnify reality.

 Indeed, it has become rather commonplace when writing about secrets to remark somewhere along the way: 'Well, you know of course, there is no secret'. Often the

secret itself admits as much. Sometimes it turns out that the secret was quite public all along (Taussig, 1999), turning the keeping of a secret into an act of maintaining secrecy, more a matter of access granted or denied by attaining a certain threshold or rite of passage (age, rank, level of trust gained, etc). As Michaelson and Shershow note, discussing the relationship of the secret to democracy: 'only the sharing of the secret is secret, not the secret itself; and even such sharing remains always suspended just this side of a necessary limit which it may always encounter in, for example, the voice of a child proclaiming an emperor's nakedness… How many can share a secret? The secret replies, so to speak: this many, but *no more*' (emphasis in original, 2005: 125). To which Lauren Berlant adds: 'The event of the secret, its meaning and force is, paradoxically, how it's *shared*' (2008, n.p.). It is worth remembering too that the Latin root-word for secret is derived from *secretum* which means hidden or set-apart; it is the past-participle of *secernere* – to separate, to distinguish, to sift (Michaelson and Shershow, 2005: 149). Our own sense of secret, secrecy, and secretion throughout this essay is related as much to processes of setting apart, sifting, and separating (all the while gathering together, pre-empting, and/or coagulating elsewhere) as to notions of concealing or hiding or otherwise rendering inconspicuous and/or unknowable. As Walter Benjamin argued: "Truth is not a matter of exposure which destroys the secret, but a revelation that does justice to it" (1977: 31). But in this age of the secrets half-volunteered/half-enforced, where curtains are usually ever only half drawn, lost is the eyes-wide power of revelation that follows from suddenly pulling the curtains back. Doing justice to the secret today regularly feels less like a moment of revelation and more like the viral movements in a remediation ('hey, omg, did you see this?' See: copied link, attached file, or post to Facebook wall).

In the next section, as we consider Deleuze & Guattari's three modalities of the secret more closely, it is the affective tone of the secret – as sifted and shared event – that will give shape to the distinctions and relations between these modes. We will argue that the secret's processual logic follows a gradualist getting-loose or diffusing without necessarily dissipating fully into the spiraling or spreading out of the secret's force-affect – from secret (pocket) to secrecy (pool) to secretion (plasma), and back again. But the *how* of the secret's sifting and sharing is really a lateralization that can move in any direction (with no simply linear 'from' or 'to'), growing and shrinking in multiple

directions at once. While secrets can certainly work to create, foster, and participate in various hierarchies of access and privilege, when it comes to their fullest range of mobility there is little in the way of verticality – no top or bottom – to the secret. Instead, secrets spread, fade, permeate, seep, disappear. Forget about declarations of true or false. In the *how* of their exposure, secrets speak in a sideways whisper of the transition or flip between nothing and something.

Nothing happens

'What is this nothing that makes something happen?' ask Deleuze and Guattari about the form of the secret (1987: 193). As we have already outlined, the *form* of the secret is, for Deleuze and Guattari, but one of its chief modalities – content (as secret), form (as secrecy) and expressivity (as secretion). They argue that the purported content of the secret is often divulged through 'couples' (think: Zuckerberg/Assange), that each entity in the couple can harbor their own 'dirty little secrets' and, as rigidly segmented (discrete/discreet), each assigns or gets assigned their own distinct sets of moral rights and wrongs (1987: 205-206). But this initial conjunction is rarely so neatly cleaved and, in fact, is doubled by an ambiance that resonates through and spreads across the length and breadth of the couple's mutual imbrications. Deleuze and Guattari allude then to how this secrecy – once a coupling, now a 'doubling' – offers a kind of 'power of the false' found in the productiveness of their seemingly mutual exclusions. Consider again how SNL's hyper-simulation further extends the false claimant status already built into the press fabulations of Zuckerberg and Assange, a doubling that extracts an element of transparent 'truth' from out of the secret's form but without necessarily dallying with any particular secret content. The bottom line(s): it doesn't much matter that Mark Zuckerberg sells our personal data and public 'secrets' to the highest bidder (through one's participation in Facebook, we have already 'half-volunteered' them anyway – whether wittingly or unwittingly). While, from the angle of the 'half-enforced', the particular content of Julian Assange's public revelations of government and corporate 'private' communications get framed as far less worrisome than the creepily sinister form of his leaking them.

Hence, the majority of the mainstream media's hue and cry centers around the 'how' of flowing violations and indiscretions of exposed governmental and corporate

secrecy with less sustained attention given to the release of any particular 'what' or discrete secret-content. With Facebook and WikiLeaks operating as the two faces of the most widely-discussed forms of public secrecies, the sheer volume of secrecy-revelation serves mainly to over-expose secrets to the half-light of attention, as a clandestine swarm or barrage of secrets becomes sometimes a clan*density* (a kind of almost impenetrable thickness) alongside a socially-scripted inevitability or clan*destiny* (as secrets turn tail and recede into a grey background of obscurity, irrelevance, and invisibility): 'What was that?' 'Oh, nothing'. But usually something – some contents – shifted in transit.

In its third mode – again, these registers or modulations of the secret should not be understood as strictly sequential – Deleuze and Guattari look to the ways that the secret – and secrecy – *secretes*, how secretions leak briskly back out into the social field (from whence they had already emerged) as a 'line of flight' or 'ooze' (1987: 287): 'The more the secret is made into a structuring, organizing form, the thinner and more ubiquitous it becomes, the more its content becomes molecular, at the same time as its form dissolves' (1987: 289). This, they suggest, is where the secret 'reaches its ultimate state: its content is molecularized, it has become molecular, at the same time as its form has been dismantled, becoming a pure moving line' (1987: 290). This is the secret as the passive forgetting of forgetting, deeper and more impersonal than any individual act of memory: the flat omniscience of secreting-saturation's conditioning of contemporary conditions. Nothing happens yet everything has changed, a new world. 'To be present at the dawn of the world... one has made the world, everybody/everything, into a becoming [...] Saturate, eliminate, put everything in' (1987: 280). But this dawning of a new world offers no ready-made guarantees for immediate affiliation with any particular political valence and, so, Deleuze and Guattari urge prudent caution over unbridled celebration.

Lines of flight (moments of escape, movement briefly unfettered) can pursue gradients of joyfulness and diffuse multiplicity: 'a line of flight forever in the process of being drawn, toward a new acceptance, the opposite of renunciation or resignation – a new happiness?' (1987: 207). Or, these same lines can take a darker turn and descend into 'disgust' or self-immolation: the danger of 'the line of flight crossing the wall, getting out of the black holes, but instead of connecting with other lines and each time augmenting its valence, *turning to destruction, abolition pure and simple, the passion of abolition*' (1987:

229, emphasis in original). It is seldom though a matter of purely following one line or directly linking one to another (saturation! abolition!) – but often something much more mixed. If Assange-Zuckerberg resonate as a messy 'couple' for our age (each with his own dirty little secrets and respective revolutions), the fusional energies that circulate in the vicinity of their binding-together serve simultaneously as the 'double' through which we feel and recognize our own affective adjacencies to this perpetual shifting in the 'how' of secrets and their divulgences, and thus our own immersions in a desiring assemblage that imperceptibly arises from out of and leeches back into the terrain of the everyday. A couple, our double, the ooze.

In what follows, we sketch out a few of the most salient features of these three modalities of the secret – content, form, and expression – as they emerge out of the present moment's swirlings of half-voluntary and half-enforced transparencies/opacities: respectively 'pocket', 'pool', and 'plasma'. Each affective modality is ceaselessly connecting to, passing through, chafing against, and resonating across/interfering with the others all the while bearing a processual and increasingly a-human beyonding or unspiraling in its own peristaltic movements. Together, they form a mobile and malleable, intimately exteriorating ensemble that, as Deleuze remarked, might reveal a secreting 'something' (no longer nothing) in the dawning of a desire that is, among other things, political.

Pocket

> To have dismantled one's self in order finally to be alone and meet the true double at the other end of the line. A clandestine passenger on a motionless voyage. To become like everybody else …. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 197)

We are half-secrets even to ourselves. Each of us is always at once a couple (at least virtual & actual), doubled again, often exteriorized through technics of memory (whether involuntary and voluntary, by way of habitually-shaped fleshy mnemonics as well as the terabytes of external storage devices) and immense-to-miniscule habituations, intimately dispersed along with the bread crumbs, cookie trails, data-doubles, and passcodes that we and our avatars have strewn along throughout the course of the day-to-day. These bits

and parsings – a maze of half-volunteered traits and trails – are then picked up again and not only by each of us on a return trip, but in aggregate: inevitably opening one (or several) up to numerous quasi-impersonal profiling machines (working to gather wide swathes of demographically-pooled data) as well as more tightly niched identity-lurings and pickpocketings (Amoore and Hall, 2009; Lyon, 2008). 'We are', as John Cheney-Lippold writes, 'entering an online world where our identifications are largely made for us. A "new algorithmic identity" is situated at a distance from traditional liberal politics, removed from civil discourse via the proprietary nature of many algorithms while simultaneously enjoying an unprecedented ubiquity in its reach to surveil and record data about users' (2011: 165). These are the continuous algorithmic modulations and open exposures (no longer discrete molds and enclosures) described by Deleuze (1992) in his vision of the control society: an undulating series of actions-upon-actions that often feel so very intimate (even if at a distance), so many micro-captures tightly woven into our daily pathways and passages, becoming very much a matter of achieving a steady baseline coziness with perpetually public mini-revelations. It is a continual flipping between half-kept-secrets and half-invited-events of their sharing, until it's a blur, until precise proportionality (what exactly does 'half' mean again?) is no longer calculable.

Here's an invitation. Go online to: http://thewildernessdowntown.com. The website's home screen says: 'Enter the address of the home where you grew up _____'. After fulfilling this request, one gains entry to the video 'The Wilderness Downtown' for the band Arcade Fire's song 'We Used To Wait For It'. You will be asked to close down any other programs running on your computer. Soon, multiple tiny screens begin to open. In one of the first, birds swoop and flock in formations against an auburn sky. On the centered main screen, a hooded runner jogs down a wet suburban street. The song itself is about the nostalgia for youth's innocence and the gradual loss of one's connectedness to things, including one's self, one's past. Eventually, a pop-up screen prompts you to write a 'postcard to the younger you who lived there then'. Soon, courtesy of Google Maps, the anonymous street switches its view as the runner turns onto (across another pop-up screen) *your* street. Mid-song, the jogger-avatar stops and begins a 360-degree spin in front of your childhood home and, if Google has previously mapped a 'Street View', yet another screen opens to provide a simulated,

sweeping point-of-view shot to go along with the synchronous windows of silhouetted birds-in-flight, the satellite view, and a couple of different screen images (both close-up and long shot) of the hooded jogger. 'Now our lives are changing fast', sings Arcade Fire's Win Butler, 'Hope that something pure can last'. But it doesn't. As the jogger-avatar turns to run away from your house, computer-generated trees begin bursting up through the street, up through the houses and throughout your neighbourhood, until (digitized) nature reclaims the map and completely covers over your just renewed prosthetic memories. By the end, the video has transported you along on a Proustian virtual voyage – suspended across the interstices of memory and forgetting – to the street- and satellite-views of your house, your neighbours' houses, the backyards, the streets, the sidewalks and paths. You have provided the personal coordinates and perhaps jotted yourself a virtual postcard. It is such a cozy surveillant assemblage: from within it, it feels as if nearly any spot on the globe becomes universally accessible (as you type in your address, you will notice Google Maps attempting to auto-fill with similar street names from other cities and countries), all singularly addressed. The whole experience is, needless to say, slightly disconcerting, tinged with bittersweetness, and oddly exhilarating.

In many ways, the video replays the performative logics of what *iSpy* author Mark Andrejevic calls the 'digital enclosure' – 'the creation of an interactive realm wherein every action and transaction generates information about itself' (2007: 2). Digital enclosures do not exist as a pre-determined shape or form in order to arrest or otherwise ensnare the actions that transpire within them; instead, a digital enclosure is continually produced in and through the volunteered coordinates and the subsequent movements of interactions themselves. While these digital enclosures come to a moment of temporary closure on one side (the participant side), they generally remain leaky or open on the other (the network side). On this other, more secretive side, movement and information continues to spiral out and loop through various consumer feedback mechanisms – termed 'cybernetic commodities' by Andrejevic (2007: 7) – so that third parties (governmental, public, or, most usually, marketshare-seeking corporate entities) might set to work divining pertinent profiling information (Aradau and Van Munster, 2007) and/or incrementally extracting profit (Cooper, 2004). A visit to the website Dictionary.com, for

instance, 'results in 223 different businesses uploading third party tracking files to your computer, each of which assigns it a unique identifying number that marketing and data-gathering companies use to record your behavior online' (Dermont, 2010). Or take, as another example, the ad exchange agency Mobclix which can – in one quarter of a second – sort a profile based upon a cellphone owner's particular app usage into one of 150 consumer segmentations 'from "green enthusiast" to "soccer moms"' (Thurm and Kane, 2010). Even our efforts to thwart third party trackers by browsing the web after installing privacy- and security-enhancing add-ons like AdblockPlus, Ghostery, BetterPrivacy, or NoScript do little to conceal our online identities insofar as such action results in our browser itself, through our software personalizations, identifying us as cybernauts with a penchant for privacy and a yearning for (effectively unattainable) anonymity. Here we can immediately see, as Andrejevic argues, that these interactive sides – web-user and online tracker – are hardly equal, that there is 'an asymmetrical loss of privacy' with 'individuals becoming increasingly transparent to both public and private monitoring agencies, even as the actions of these agencies remains stubbornly opaque in the face of technologies that make collecting, sharing, and analyzing large amounts of information easier than ever before' (2007: 7). So we will never actually quite meet face to face with all of the hooded data-dopplegängers on the street in front of our house. As soon as our avatar locates our house and does a spin, it turns to run and we lose it in the forest, unable to see ourselves for the virtual trees.

Arcade Fire's 'Wilderness Downtown' video is, however, less intent on infinitely parsing you as a 'dividual' – Deleuze's name for what follows when there is no longer a 'duality of mass and individual' (1995: 180): each of us becoming a flowing aggregate of modulated market segmentations. Cheney-Lippard notes that 'dividuals can be seen as those data that are aggregated to form unified subjects, of connecting dividual parts through arbitrary closures at the moment of the compilation of a computer program or at the result of a database query' (2011: 169). While, in the case of Arcade Fire, you have volunteered your personal information, this video's own leaky process of loop-and-capture seems somewhat more benign. As it turns out, the postcard that you wrote to your younger self may be used as visual content to be projected, in a montage of similar messages, onto video screens playing behind the band during their 'Suburbs' Tour while

your home address 'gets entered into The Wilderness Machine which will actually print out [your] message on a seed-embedded card that, when planted, will grow a real-live tree' ('Behind the Work', 2010). So, while there is limited chance of wider public exposure if and when a message that you have written to yourself gets screen-projected during a live performance, each of these actions only serves to bring the cybernetic loop to a potential moment of personal and public closure and completion: you and your memories, the band and fellow concertgoers, seed and future tree. The video and your participation in its machinations are akin, in many ways, to the art project PostSecret where anonymous people mail off homemade postcards of their deepest, darkest secrets and, then, certain cards are selected and uploaded to the PostSecret website for public viewing. Andrejevic refers to this kind of online self-disclosure as 'lateral peer-to-peer monitoring' (2007: 212): a casual dress-rehearsal and soft internalization of the market and state imperatives of consumer and citizen surveillance. Half-volunteered. All these tiny frissons of the personal and the public venturing out together on the thread of a tune (as your data-double dances at the other end of the line), coming locally to a screen very near you: so near – like a pocket you might furtively slip something into (including yourself) – and never too far away. You tell yourself: 'Just this many and no more'. The sharing of this secret content reveals itself as an act of memory tangled up with a miniature premonition: 'I can't help myself. And I know I shouldn't ... but still. Pssst, can I tell you a secret?' The start of a secret's becoming. In this, we are just like everybody else.

Pooling

> We go from a content that is well defined, localized, and belongs to the past, to the a priori general form of a nonlocalizable *something* that has happened. We go from the secret defined as a hysterical childhood content to secrecy defined as an eminently virile paranoid form. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 288)

If secrets as pockets are about the relative perceptibilities of localizations, nearnesses (at least an affectively 'felt-nearness'), and evocations of a certain past-ness with its involuntary/voluntary memory-circuits (acting collectively as what Cheney-Lippold calls

the rise of a 'soft biopolitics' [2011]), then secrecy as pooling emerges in the relay of distances, in a beginning to come to grips with futurity, and in an emergent awareness that there is 'a perception that is always finer than yours, a perception of your imperceptible, of what is in your box' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 287). If pockets are rather distinctly (intra-/inter-/trans-)personal and usually half-volunteered, poolings are fundamentally impersonal (non-/a-personal), intersecting with the more-than- or other-than-human, and tend to arrive more from the angle of the half-enforced. With poolings, it is still a matter of segmentations or compartments to be opened, sorted, and aggregated, yet also secrecy serves as a supple line or a tangled knot of undulations always running alongside you, and then almost immediately beyond you: future-oriented, risk-based, pre-emptive (Amoore and de Goede, 2008; Anderson, 2010; de Goede and Randalls, 2009; Elmer and Opel, 2006; Martin, 2007; Massumi, 2007). Thus, as Deleuze and Guattari say: it is secrecy as eminently virile (yes, and viral too) that lends itself to a creeping paranoia – perhaps not wholly unearned (Chun, 2006). With poolings, these leakages or secrecies seem always to precede our options for volunteering them. Often unbeknownst to ourselves, we become the harbourers or carriers of secrecies – secrecies promulgated by the very persons, institutions, and machines that are searching for them. That is, we don't volunteer or speak secrecies as much as they utter us, usher us into particular presents, presencings, and pre-sensings; we suddenly find ourselves to be the quasi-interpellated subjects or the involuntary utterances produced or pronounced through *their* processes of extraction and enunciation. And there may be no better example of such secrecies (and tactics for their extraction) than the recent deployment of whole- or 'full-body' body scanners at border crossings and at security checkpoints, most frequently encountered at airports (Magnet and Rodgers, 2011).

The rise of the full (or, indeed, naked) body scanner phenomenon has been motivated by an effort not only to make risks visible, but by an effort to have everyone – citizen and security agent alike – 'willingly' submit to an overarching securitizing logic of absolute exposure. These scanners are lauded, in spite of their apparent ineffectiveness (Kaufman and Carlson, 2010) and in light of the underlying profit motives hastening their implementation (Cooper, 2004; Kindy, 2010), for their capacities to offer a finer perception of the imperceptible, of divulging – through high-resolution scans (albeit with

– we are told – a few discreetly fuzzed-out zones) – 'what is in your box', under your clothes, in your underwear. Never mind that security officials in Germany have reported that their newly acquired scanners cannot see through folds and pleats in clothing (*The Local*, 2010) or that full body scanners are actually pretty useless for risk detection. Instead, the entire process itself comes to serve as high-tech 'security theatre' (Schneier, 2003). That's the point. The secret of full body scanners lies in their powers of fabulation, in their dopperling generation of appearances: appearances of security, appearances of bold and decisive action, appearances of risk management, appearances of 'this-is-for-your-own-good', appearances of rights being protected. But of course, the visibility and transparency only become complete once all participants – the bodies of the scanned, those scanning, and their respective witnesses – act in concert toward this presumably greater good: a sort of communally-constructed security system designed to make it appear as though secrets are being abolished and threats annihilated before they have barely become whispers.

Full-body scans take place in a screening area where the act of looking and being looked at, the act of looking at others looking, and the act of looking for lookers who might be looking from hidden rooms creates a complex, highly staged environment of intersecting (and unequal) surveillances (Tiessen, 2011). Passengers and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officials act together, relying on what is seen – in an almost rhythmic, if not also discomfiting, on-the-spot coordination of transparency and secrecy – to define what passes as the 'new normal'. As passengers, we are compelled at once to conceal and to expose, to become both visible and invisible in order to pass imperceptibly through the security/surveillance assemblage (Haggerty and Ericson, 2000). So, as TSA officials stare and scan in search of anomalies, we stare out too, while waiting in line to be next, at both those doing the staring and those being stared at in an attempt to discern how to render ourselves invisible, unnoticed, imperceptible before the techno-forces exposing us for our own (and everyone else's) 'good' and perhaps discovering something about ourselves that we never knew existed. These feedback loops of looking, exposure, surveillance, concealing, digital imagery, and analog anxiety collaboratively create a homeostatic environment of interdependence wherein all activities reciprocally support one another: a dull (and often slow-moving) but prickly

pooling of transparency/secrecy metastability that, if disturbed or otherwise triggered adversely, reacts quickly to quarantine the disruption and quell any ripple effects that might follow. Moreover, the move to maximize visualizations in airport screening procedures – particularly visualizations of the human body, of flesh itself – extends the previous set of airport security protocols that focused on metallic object sensors and baggage inspection. Today, in addition to our luggage being inspected as it passes through a concealed chamber of X-rays, our bodies are put on display as we step into the glassed-in space of these transparency machines: on display for security personnel who gaze beneath our clothes as well as for other passengers who witness us spread our legs and raise our arms above our heads in a pose most usually reserved for those surrendering to their captors.

While some may find relative comfort in the knowledge that the TSA's voyeur is 'isolated' in an unseen chamber and thus unable to interact with passengers directly, the implication of acquiescing to an unseen, remote surveillance system and its scanning regime is profound: acting with all of the subtly suggestive pull and pooling of the half-enforced. Certainly, it is your choice and admittedly the secret-extraction process itself is not secret (although what is done with any secrets discovered – who has access to them, how they'll be used, whether they will come back to haunt us – is shrouded in secrecy). So feel free to skip the full-body scanner, but then you will need to step aside for the very hands-on, newly 'enhanced' pat down procedure – one that pokes and prods, that presses and flattens out personal folds and intimate creases until 'resistances' are met or yielded (Goldberg, 2010). So, we 'willingly' expose ourselves in order to remain invisible by revealing what we are not: a threat, a risk, an anomaly. The full body scanner, we are told, anonymizes us, digitally alters us (or parts of us), transforming our bodies into image bits and data bytes. We (half-?) volunteer ourselves to reveal that we are not worthy of further inspection, that we are evacuated of all secrets.

According to the logics that the scanning process operates under, our ability to reveal our anonymity – our not having secret contents – becomes a way to protect ourselves from the risks posed by the mutating and modulating security system itself, the risks that follow from attempting to remain hidden. But, of course, during the time it takes us to avert the non-detection of our non-secrets, the attention and inspection – as

form – has already occurred; we are already immersed by submitting to this instantiation of the preemptively positioned surveillant assemblage. In this way, the system's fabulations on behalf of the appearance of security doubles our own momentarily paranoid fabulations as carriers of secrecies somehow finer and more imperceptible than we can know ourselves. 'We can even envision', write Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 287), 'a profession of secrecy for those who are in a position to perceive the secret. The protector of the secret is not necessarily in on it, but is also tied to a perception, since he or she must perceive and detect those who wish to discover the secret (counterespionage)'. And they add: 'whatever the finalities or results, the secret has a way of spreading that is in turn shrouded in secrecy' (1987: 287). Secrets pocketed become secrecies pooled.

Thus, it will come as no surprise to find that the current use of the full-body scanner may soon be spreading to even finer means of perceiving secrets, oozing ever more futural and fabulative. The next generation of secret detection and pre-emptive securization will use remote sensing equipment and algorithmic calculation trained to separate out somatic cues and affective dispositions in order to scan in real time such things as: pulse rate, body temperature, anxiety, and brain activity. The TSA first named its working project FAST (for 'Future Attribute Screening Technology') but later retitled it 'Hostile Intent':

> [U]nder the remit and development of the Science and Technology Directorate, whose ultimate aim is 'to develop a non-invasive, remote, culturally independent, automated intent and deception detection system' (King, 2007: 1). The TSA's call for manufacturer, industry, and academic solutions suggests a new reach of behavior detection observation, sometimes referred to as suspicious behavior detection. (Adey, 2009: 282)

Having sifted and extracted the secrecies borne along by our material bodies, now our bodies will be called upon to reveal (again) the more immaterial intentions lurking behind or, better, *before* our actions – whether we half-volunteer them or not.

Of course, these new secrecy-detecting technologies will be conveyed to the public as merely another iteration in the non-invasive extensions of remote, increasingly

invisible, and privacy-enhancing surveillance systems that, when fully realized, won't even need a human voyeur-operator at the other end. Secrecy detection and collection will be used to bundle up multiple incorporeal tendings as scanning turns fully-spatially immersive and 'futur antérieur', as various data-emanations are gathered and pooled. Subtle emittances and exposures will be machinically detected or at least threatened with the *appearance* of such detection. Secrets that the secret-bearers may never have realized resided within or atmospherically about them will be brought to light, pre-figured and pre-packaged for potential emergence. Thresholds of risk will be set with supple triggers or miniscule trip mechanisms ready to be pulled. Already the 'importance of "setting the gauge"' so that projective algorithmic models can continually refine the rules for how security risk data is to 'be "flushed" or "washed" through' has become a more widely recognized data-pooling practice (Amoore, 2011: 31). All of these registers, risk scores, and protocols – eminently virile and viral – signal the ever-rising use of impersonal, nonhuman secrecy-detection/creation, the coming and already-here machines of 'visceral literacy' (Andrejevic, 2010). Or to refocus on what Deleuze and Guattari say of secrecy in this section's epigraph, 'the a priori general form of a nonlocalizable *something* … has happened' (1987: 288). Was that your pulse just racing?

Plasma

> [Every] secret society has a still more secret hindsociety, which either perceives the secret, protects it, or metes out the punishment for its disclosure [….] Every secret society has its own mode of action, which is in turn secret; the secret society may act by influence, creeping, insinuation, oozing, pressure, or invisible rays; 'passwords' and secret languages (there is no contradiction here; the secret society cannot live without the universal project of permeating all of society, of creeping into all of the forms of society, disrupting its hierarchy and segmentation; the secret hierarchy conjugates with a conspiracy of equals, it commands its members to swim in society as fish in water, but conversely society must be like water around fish; it needs the complicity of the entire surrounding society). (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 287-88)

Consider, finally, plasma – a somewhat contentious concept that we are loosely adapting from Bruno Latour – as it is expressed through the collective affective secretions that bleed into and colour how we persist in the poolings and pockets of the everyday: the sheer permeating immanence of affectivities. Plasma's saturative power (its processual potential) is composed of those fluctuating connectivities and banal evanescences that largely go unnoticed, unmapped, unremarked. Imagine plasma as akin to a pool of batter being poured, over and over again, onto a waffle-iron and then gridded, in the press of surfaces, into lines and intersections and pockets.

Plasma is described by Latour as the ooze, the secretion – 'the soft, impalpable liquid' (Latour, 2005: 245) – that fills the empty spaces of 'networks', as that which conditions (and gets conditioned by) the myriad secretions that transpire at the intersections and overlappings of the human and non-human: a sort of Möbius strip of secrets and secrecies (minus the strip) where substantial distinctions – especially sociological ones – of inside and outside cease to have much purchase. That is, in many ways, plasma is not unlike the null overflow and persistent undertow of quotidian intensities that characterize Maurice Blanchot's notion of 'the Outside' (Seigworth, 2000: 233), described as '(what lags and fall back, the residual life with which our trash cans and cemeteries are filled: scrap and refuse); but this banality is also what is most important, if it brings us back to existence in its very spontaneity and as it is lived – in the moment when, lived, it escapes every speculative formulation, perhaps all coherence, all regularity' (Blanchot, 1993: 239). Similarly, Latour (who would likely offer up a wider set of residues for what counts alongside the lived) wonders 'if the social landscape possesses […] a flat "networky" topography' then 'what is in between the meshes of such a circuitry?' (2005: 242). Latour suggests that, far from being a problem, the relative formlessness of relational networks affords an opportunity to conceive a mobile place-position for a subjacent/superjacent interleaving of lived reality that sets the scene for all manner of seeping/rising ontologies, continually opening and reopening a ground – an open-ended pre-condition – upon which patterns of relations can come to be expressed. Nigel Thrift has described this as an essential aspect in figuring the ongoing technological transformations in both 'temporal envelopments' (2011: 15) and in

the production of space … [beginning] with the introduction of new forms of information technology that produced a generalized capacity to track movement and is likely to end with the redefinition of the world of persons and objects as constituent elements of a mutually constitutive moving 'frame', which is not really a frame at all but more of a fabric that is constantly being spun over and over again as position becomes mobile, sometimes producing new patterns. (7)

If there is a half-hopeful moment here, it is that the potential of plasma might be churned in a manner that produces alternate space-times and joyous spontaneities that flee in every direction and that come to coalesce (or further disintegrate) in often unforeseen but fortuitous ways. More batter, less waffle iron: although the outcome of such can hardly be guaranteed.

Plasma, Latour argues, is 'not hidden, simply unknown', it resembles 'a vast hinterland providing resources for every single course of action to be fulfilled, much like the countryside for an urban dweller, much like the missing masses for a cosmologist trying to balance out the weight of the universe' (2005: 244). While Latour is famously intent on extending 'the social' to include nonhuman entities and forces, it is just as important to give an account of those effectively imperceptible, re-generative forces of indeterminacy from which the social emerges and to which it returns eternally. In his view '[w]e have to be able to consider both the formidable inertia of social structures and the incredible fluidity that maintains their existence: the latter is the real milieu that allows the former to circulate' (2005: 245). Plasma's insinuations, then, do not immediately reveal themselves so much as envelop us within a modulating sieve or screen through which the pools and pockets of our always-more-than-human everydayness are lived in fluidifying quasi-omniscience. As Deleuze and Guattari observe: 'It is by conjugating, by continuing with other lines, other pieces, that one makes a world that can overlay the first one, like a transparency' (1987: 280). Thus, we wish to consider Latour's plasma as a mobile plane composed and recomposed of innumerable lines of forces and force-affects, matter and matterings, secrets and secretings – a vast and roiling composition of secretions. This plasma is the 'outside' that

sociologists were 'right to look for', but, as the outside, it 'does not resemble at all what they expected since it is entirely devoid of any trace of calibrated social inhabitant' (Latour, 2005: 244). Moreover, whenever this plasmatic hinterland has even momentarily snapped into focus,

> it's as if a vertiginous reversal of background and foreground had taken place. Once the whole social world is relocated inside its metrological chains, an immense new landscape jumps into view. If knowledge of the social is limited to the termite galleries in which we have been traveling, what do we know about what is outside? Not much. (2005: 242)

Not much? But beyond the labyrinthine passages of the termite galleries we want to pursue here how equally labyrinthine expressions of financial or market 'liquidity' – or, perhaps better, what Anastasia Nesvetailova describes as 'hollow liquidity' or the 'illusion of liquidity' (2010) – might serve as one vantage point onto the role of plasma as a sort of abstracted, indefinite, desiring, permeating ooze that increasingly helps to render the parameters of contemporary existence(s).

Liquidity, in the financial world, gauges how easily assets can be converted into cash and how readily any of the various forms of capital (money, productive, speculative, landed, etc.) can be transduced and secreted into another form (Haiven, 2011). In this way, liquidity can also extend to refer more broadly to the globally integrated financial system's need (or desire) to meet its future obligations (for nominal monetary growth or 'profit' and for ongoing economic expansion) in part by keeping the funds flowing through the perpetual outlay/creation of more 'credit' and, correspondingly, more debt.

This is an immense and (not-entirely-)new global landscape webbing out as an interconnected financializing regime created by way of credit-friendly government legislation/deregulation, debt-driven media machines, and an increasingly centralized network of privately held institutions of global financial governance – chief among them, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank, and the Bank of International Settlements. All of these interdependent actors work to prop up a post-Bretton Woods, post-gold-standard financial world without 'universal equivalent', a world built upon and saturated with Ponzi-esque credit-money

(Minsky, 2008; Nesvetailova, 2008), a world that until the liquidity-crunch of 2008 coasted along on the comforting illusion of infinitely expanding credit and endless financial innovation: striving for maximum viscosity, striving always to be more fluid and friction-free (Crotty, 2009). Consider, for instance, the way that the discourse of 'liquidity' now glides so smoothly into discussions surrounding the need for a European Treasury to provide 'euro bonds' to shore up – by rolling over – Europe's burgeoning liquidity crisis (Spiegel Online, 2011), the US Federal Reserve's decisions on whether or not to pursue still further 'quantitative easing', or the World Economic Forum's declaration that the world needs $100 trillion in new credit over the next ten years to perpetuate and extend global liquidity and growth (World Economic Forum, 2011).

The plasma-saturation effects of leveraged liquidity (particularly in an age of financial deregulation and derivative-friendly legislation like the Commodity Futures Modernization Act), the reliance on allegedly liquidity-bolstering derivatives markets and 'high frequency trading' markets, and the proliferation of opaque financial innovations such as collateralization (Tavakoli, 2008) have been aided and abetted by the near-impenetrability of computer automated financialization, conveniently fogging the perceptions and intuitions of even the most savvy, long-term market actors and observers (Lenglet, 2011: 61). In the press for liquidity saturation, the risks that excessive liquidity were once intended to sweep away began to swell and leech out, inhibiting its flow: 'a set of innovations that were supposed to create freer markets and complete the system of risk optimization [instead] produced an opaque world in which risk was becoming highly concentrated; worryingly, in ways almost nobody understood' (Nesvetailova, 2010: 133). The secreting 'hindsociety' or 'hinterland' of heavily leveraged liquidity and the securitization of precariously priced assets in the form of collateralized debt obligations, credit default swaps, and derivatives is perhaps at its slipperiest in its knack for evading almost any attempt at sustained and comprehensive critique. Inherent and eminent dangers are either publicly disavowed or otherwise secreted away (often acting in 'purloined letter' mode by hiding in plain sight via publicly released but thoroughly opaque balance sheets, derivatives contracts, and corporate earnings statements).

In significant ways, the 'expanded immanence' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 231) of today's liquidity-focus must be understood as the most recent and aggressive attempt

by capitalism to overcome its own internal limits. As Karl Marx understood: 'Capitalist production is continually engaged in the attempt to overcome these immanent barriers, but it overcomes them only by means which again place the same barriers in its way in a more formidable size. *The real barrier of capitalist production is capital itself*' (2007: 293). Indeed, contemporary capitalism's expanded immanence has resulted, we suggest, in a sort of post-social financialized dispositif – expressed as a globe-spanning plasma – with an agency all its own. This is an algorithmically driven assemblage that metabolizes financially innovative forms of liquidity using ever more virtual, leveraged, and outsized markets to keep it alive. This assemblage is, on the one hand, motivated by human desire, but on the other less-human-hand is driven forward by an expansionist desire all its own – the machinic need for liquidity, the need for credit, the need to create and feed on indebtedness and 'technocrat'-imposed austerity.

Further, the plasma-like nature of contemporary money's life-force – liquidity – suggests that a renewed focus upon money's machinations and its relationship to banking and finance is a more-than-urgent necessity. Deleuze and Guattari presciently observed:

> In a sense, it is the bank that controls the whole system and the investment of desire. One of Keynes's contributions was the reintroduction of desire into the problem of money; it is this that must be subjected to the requirements of Marxist analysis. That is why it is unfortunate that Marxist economists too often dwell on considerations concerning the mode of production, and on the theory of money as the general equivalent as found in the first section of Capital, without attaching enough importance to banking practice, to financial operations, and to the specific circulation of credit money-which would be the meaning of a return to Marx, to the Marxist theory of money. (1983: 230)

So while the world of finance is a social one with all manner of social affects and effects, the financialized assemblage's insatiable appetite for liquidity, for the unfettered flow of secretions, might be best approached in its wendings through the secretions of 'plasma': what is 'in between and not made of social stuff' (Latour, 2005: 244). That is, now more than ever it is 'liquidity' that oozes up through and across the 'flat "networky" topography' of 'the social landscape'; it is the quest after new circuits for liquidity to

cycle through – via, for example, the maintenance of historically and artificially low interest rates and the continual creation of markets to tap: e.g. carbon trading markets (Drew and Drew, 2010) or weather derivatives (Alaton et al., 2002; Pryke, 2007) – that moves, puddles, and sometimes gets jammed in 'the meshes of such a circuitry' (Latour, 2005: 242).

One of the greatest fears rippling through (and just beneath) the circuitry of financial markets in recent years has been the formation of what are known as immense 'dark pools' of liquidity. While such pools are not entirely new, what is most worrisome at present is how rapidly their growth has followed from the use of algorithmic trading that slices and dices orders so that the largest portion of a trade can remain submerged (known as 'iceberg orders') and essentially undetected by the rest of the market until after the trade has already transpired (Cripps, 2007). The French government has been especially out-front in calling for closer monitoring and regulation of these dark pools of liquidity, claiming that otherwise 'how can the virtual global market be reconstituted … when an increasing number of transactions are subject to absolutely no pre-trade transparency?' (AMF, 2009). But 'dark pools' are simply one of the most obvious examples of collective secretions dwelling in the shade cast by global financial market's own wider plasmatic oscillations, circulating in public but secret at the same time.

The public secrecy of money's appetite, of course, is one of its most potent features. As Simmel long ago pointed out, money makes secrecy 'possible' due to its convertibility and its ability to be concealed and immaterial:

> Money, more than any other form of value, makes possible the secrecy, invisibility and silence of exchange. […] Money's formlessness and abstractness makes it possible to invest it in the most varied and most remote values and thereby to remove it completely from the gaze of neighbours. Its anonymity and colourlessness does not reveal the source from which it came to the present owner: it does not have a certificate of origin in the way in which, more or less disguised, many concrete objects of possession do. (2004: 387-88)

Today's virtual money only makes Simmel's observations exponentially more true. But while Simmel points to the ways that money can function as a conduit or facilitator of

secrecy, his analysis in this passage misses the even more energetic and constantly evolving secretions of credit-money itself – its demands and desires, its means of expansion and contraction in pursuit of overcoming its theoretically non-existent limits (limits which, if the recent bubbles in technology sectors, real estate, and bond markets are any indication, have never existed in the minds of speculators). But then Simmel was writing his theories of money in a commodity money era when money was more constrained and tended to be backed by gold rather than floating on today's post-Bretton Woods promises (and underlying premises). Indeed, the degree to which Simmel's historically-situated insights overlook the potential for credit-money expansion to effectively pull (and pool) resources and energy from the future – by bringing it into existence as a liability – reveals not only credit-money's shape-shifting capacity and its relative invisibility, but also the variable degree to which money's agential urgency can be ramped up or toned down based on its relationship to, more or less, hard assets *and* to the virtual promise of an immediately actualizable future.

The implication of fiat-based credit-money's hunger for liquidity (and liquidity's need for more credit) is that it prefigures the world as an interest-generating machine, 'colonizing the future' (Peebles, 2008: 238) by forcing it to be put to work both today and tomorrow in service of today's and yesterday's expenditures. This process is not ideologically minded so much as it generates ideologies that are driven by the necessities – the desires – of the money form itself. Insofar as that is the case, ideological and political expressions of financializing logics (privatization, neoliberalization, corporatization, securitization) can be regarded as *effects* of, or *responses* to, credit-money's appetite for liquidity, an appetite that comes to precede ideology and the political by feeding on and creating the problem of 'indebtedness': a problem in need of ideological and political 'solutions'. The liquidity crisis is only one expression drawn from out of a whole web of credit-driven colonizations that borrow from the future to fund today's human and more-than-human desires. In his *Extreme Money*, Satyajit Das observes that 'there are similarities between the financial system, irreversible climate change, and shortages of vital resources like oil, food, and water. In each case, society borrowed from the future, shifting problems to generations to come. In the end, you literally devour the future until eventually the future devours you' (2011: 361). So, the

imperceptible but not impalpable potency of this liquidity-generating system ends up consuming resources and energy at an ever increasing rate since sufficient profit needs to be realized in order to pay off the exponentially-growing debt – otherwise the whole game comes crashing down as liquidity turns illiquid.

Of the financial instruments designed to leverage the future and stave off illiquidity in the present it is derivatives that have – particularly over the last decade – become the most notorious: growing from a yearly valuation of only a few million dollars in 1970 (prior to the removal of the gold standard) to about $100 million in 1980 to nearly $100 billion in 1990 to nearly $100 trillion in 2000 to nearly $200 trillion in 2005 (Bryan and Rafferty, 2007: 154). By the end of 2010, the *Wall Street Journal* estimated that the transactions of derivatives would be approximately $700 trillion for the year – dwarfing the $55 trillion of global gross domestic product (Burne, 2010). While derivatives were intended as a means to transfer and manage risk, today, along with securization (how individual notes of credit or debt are bundled together and traded as securities), they have also become the leading indicators, if not outright instigators, of fluctuations in the world's financial health (Bryan and Rafferty, 2006; Sundaram and Das, 2010; MacKenzie, 2006). Beholden to the mobilities of differential calculus and the 'black box' conveniences of financial mathematic's meta-modelizations, derivatives are the facilitators of inter- and infra-temporal/spatial conjunctions that serve as a bridge over a whole host of material and immaterial disjunctions (Pryke and Allen, 2000). Derivatives are less discrete units of measure and more contagious generators and re-generators of equivalence, reconciling the disparate values of, well, just about anything and everything by betting on (or away?) the future through algorithmic assessments of time-trajectory and risk.

If we live in an era that thrives on (the illusion of) liquidity and that oozes with myriad debt secretions, derivatives sit upon this plasma as, at once, producer and parasite, undertaking various plungings (and plunderings): extracting some momentary point of articulation as the site of its functioning (vibrantly tinged with risk and profit), charting out this moment's articulation to a contractually pre-arranged future point in time, graphing value in slopes and tangent lines around the instantaneous rate of change in its original function, and attaching a price to this entire process. In this way, derivatives

work to construct a plane of global relative-equivalence through processes of continual recalculation on sloping vectors of differentiation. When aggregated, a collective surface-blur of global interstitial stability/instability emerges, floating along on a percolating sea of more than two and a half trillion dollars of derivatives transaction per day.

Because the derivatives markets produces relationalities out of the always already open-ended and endlessly differentiated fluidities of plasmatic value, they can come to provide an overdetermined motor and transitional switch for the flipping of secretions and transparencies between background and foreground in our own critical thinking. In this analytical flip, one might begin to see that – beyond/between/beneath the various value-commensurations of financial instruments – an immense landscape (a vast hinterland, a secret hindsociety) slides into view that may, in the end, offer little in the way of actual and immediate solutions to problems but does say plenty about the conditions and the historically-specific motivations behind them. And that's a start. It is not that all forms of 'value' can ultimately be reduced to or converted into monetary value (despite their best efforts) but, rather, over the last few decades finance capital has stepped forward to present itself – and subsequently been represented in everyday social scriptings – as the ultimate arbiter of value and as the suturing translator of differences (Grossberg, 2010). Insofar as there exists no 'universal equivalent' in a liquidity-hungry, credit-driven, debt-supported, fiat currency-based environment, the need for nominal monetary growth with stable and consistent rates of inflation (thus, perpetual liquidity) functions as *the* effectively value*less* value futilely trying to keep pace with currencies' constant devaluation. It is this mythology – the financial world's mythology of the potential for an infinitely expanding rate of growth with zero or at least 'knowable' risk on an ecologically finite planet of devaluing paper- and virtual-currencies (to say nothing of natural resources) – that is collapsing: albeit with very real, very material effects. While the markets may very well come to drown themselves in the dark pools of their own liquidity, many among the rest of us are left parched and living under various state-imposed conditions of austerity.

Built from the movements and collective secretions of market actants (not unlike termites in their galleries), plasmatic liquidity is an expansive immanence continually arising, cross-networking, receding, returning, remixing. But it is neither undifferentiated

nor some kind of primordially eternal, single plane, One-All. This is not *the* world but a world (one of many, a proliferation) of ongoingness that is generatively differential and always to-be-made-and-remade – by commensurating the values of the human *and* the non-human. Here then finance capital and, more specifically, liquidity-generating, consensually-illusory derivatives serve as one of plasma's more dominant insinuating modes, forever calculating and recalculating value based on monetary value's latest valuation. When it comes to capital's capacity for debt-secretion, we – often despite ourselves (and this is no secret) – have become its carriers, become its species-beings, become the objects of capital's designs and desires, lured over and over again by its promises of futurity, by its cruel optimism (Berlant, 2011), by its irrationally exuberant externalizing triumphalism. We have learned to speak its secrets and cater to its parasitical needs as if they were our own.

But plasma as the immanent composition/decomposition of secretions might perpetually also recall us to the ways that we (human, nonhuman, and in-between) are affectively more than this too, more than the production of equivalences between monetary-value secretions. This requires what Lauren Berlant calls taking 'the measure of the impasse of the present' (2011: 263) where we strive then 'to produce some better ways of mediating the sense of a historical moment that is affectively felt but undefined in the social world that is supposed to provide some comforts of belonging, so that it would be possible to imagine a potentialized present that does not reproduce all of the conventional collateral damage' (263). The ongoing global economic crisis may very well signal the beginning of the end of 'a' world and the unraveling of a certain world historical-moment's fever-dream where all that is incommensurable melts into a liquid of universal equivalence. At such an impasse, could it be that plasma might shed the clamorous voice of the market and, instead, be heard in its half-hopeful/half-fateful murmurings and alternative makings? Always more batter. Another world is plasmable.

The End of Secrets?

In our days, it is not so much the possibility of betrayal or violation of privacy that frightens us, but its opposite: shutting down the exits. […] *We seem to experience no joy in having secrets. (*Bauman, 2011: n.p., emphasis in original)

There is a terrifically telling YouTube clip of Julian Assange dancing at a disco in Reykjavik. The *New Statesmen* was surely right, in their brief write-up of former WikiLeaks spokesperson Daniel Domscheit-Berg's book *Inside WikiLeaks: My Time With Julian Assange at the World's Most Dangerous Website,* when they highlight – above all else – a description of Assange's dancing style*:* this is a man who occupies a lot of space when he dances (Hasteley, 2011). It is the dance of someone who knows where all of the exits are located, the dance of someone who believes in the end of secrets. We, however, are not altogether sure that secrets ever have an end (or, for that matter, a beginning). Still, it is along the line of a fantastical imagining (whether joyous or joyless) about a future end to secrets (from the nation-state and global corporation to the private and personal) – whether dissolving, getting loose or molecularizing – that Julian Assange and Mark Zuckerberg meet up one more time to find themselves occupying the same side of the social media coin (as, of course, it has always been).

Witness, for instance, how Zuckerberg speaks of privacy as an 'evolving social norm', lists 'eliminating desire' on his Facebook profile as one of his main interests (alongside 'minimalism' and 'revolution'), and how he recounts for a New Yorker journalist his fondness for the *Aeneid* and 'the story of Aenea's quest and his desire to build a city that … "knows no boundaries in time and greatness". […] "… a nation/empire without bound"' (Vargas, 2010). But then in an immediate attempt to deflate the attachment of any *über*-meaning to this statement, Zuckerberg also tells the same reporter via a follow-up on-line chat, that he is not revealing anything particularly profound here, no secrets, but that these are just 'the most famous quotes in the aeneid' (ibid). No great insight, just something else flat and fairly affectless (go ahead and google it: 'aeneid' + 'famous quotes') – more of a lateralizing secretion, more of mere meandering ooze than some bubbled-up secret-content to be popped.

Meanwhile, in a *Radical Philosophy* essay, Finn Brunton draws careful attention to Assange's 'knack for odd lateral thinking, an unremarked gift that turns up throughout his work' and how this capacity shows up in the technological infrastructure of WikiLeaks as:

the application of computational thinking to politics, a sustained consideration of the relationship between secrecy and publicity, a strategy for automatically rewarding open organizations relative to closed, and, perhaps most surprisingly, a philosophical engagement with logic and phenomenology that becomes a model for a politics that compensates technologically for human cognitive deficits. (2011: n.p.)

This latter point – 'a politics that compensates technologically for human cognitive deficits' – is, needless to say perhaps, what both Facebook and WikiLeaks are in the midst of working out (the immanently mobile construction of a non-place for secrets) or working through (the role of the political in the midst of the transformation of the relations between personal and public): although as a practical and processual matter it is always more than cognitive (also affectual, material, ephemeral, etc.) and more or sometimes other than political (also economic, social, place-specific, ethical, and so on, without presuming their mutual exclusions too).

We have attempted to argue throughout this essay that content (secret), form (secrecy), and expression (secretion) should not be conceived as simply forming a linear chain with each modality leading directly to the next. Rather, we have looked to how the relationships between these various modes of the secret are more about contemporary technologically-inflected shifts in how we live within the blurring relations between near and far, between voluntary and enforced, between inside and outside, more about how the affective motility of secrets/secrecies/secretions act to capture, sift and separate (and then bunch together) what is already moving through 'a world of "movement-space"' (Thrift, 2011: 7) – and less about the delivery of some grand sweeping gesture that unveils what has been purposefully hidden or covered. Voila! So maybe it is a dance: but probably not quite Bauman's desolate, slow dance at the end of having secrets and not quite Assange/Zuckerberg's all-available-space-occupying dance of desirelessness and the loss of inhibitions in reaching and stretching toward the same fantasized end. Maybe the status of the secret has always been something in-between – between something and nothing, between this many and no more, between seeping and gathering, and, thus, it is very much a matter of thinking-feeling our way into and out of the technological/socially

mediated/algorithmic patternings and dissonances that rebound between the half-voluntary and the half-enforced – of seeking out ways to take the measure of this particular impasse. So we will end by circling back to a question posed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 206) that resonates now as strongly as ever: 'What are your couples, your doubles, your clandestines, and what are their mixes?'

It hardly seems a secret anymore – some answers must be shared.

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