# The longest journey is from our heads to our hearts

Jennifer Moon

## Abstract

The central claim of essentialism is that every entity has a set of attributes that are inherent to its identity and function. The doctrine of essentialism states that essence comes before existence, thereby relegating to science and philosophy the task of its discovery and expression. All entities, whether subject/object, actual/potential, concrete/abstract, physical/immaterial, animate/inanimate, are assigned intrinsic qualities by scientists, philosophers, the state, institutions, and other figures of authority. These ascribed fundamental characteristics, which are based on the belief that they existed prior to human intervention, then consolidate into identities. Identities, therefore, are anything that assigns and holds value or worth to maintain our beliefs, which are determined by a system rooted in binaries, hierarchies, and capital that ultimately fixes us in a 5% universe.

As many activists and theorists have proven, such socio-political assignments of identities are constructs designed to control and oppress groups of people and are, therefore, continually challenged and critiqued. Thus, the claim here is that all forms of identities are traumatic. Anytime an identity is instituted, adopted, or performed, it reveals the trauma it comes from. In addition, acknowledging that identities, self-assigned or state-assigned, are often necessary in the world we live in, does not foreclose the dismantling of the entities that insist on assigning identities in the first place. Moving alongside and beyond essentialism, the proposed experiment is to shed all identities to make observation and identification impossible, which will enable an expansion beyond the 5%.

Over the course of two weeks, this research will look for queer quantum possibilities to collapse identities by mapping out all the external and internalized systems, beliefs, emotions, feelings, traumas that form the various identities that coalesce, at specific moments in space and time, into a unitary subject. This unitary subject then informs the ways in which we intra-act and communicate with other entities with similarly complex and complicated systems of influence. The objective is to locate moments of collapse in communication that resemble gravitational collapse found within black holes. If intensely observed, probed, inspected, and measured, these impasses in communication could stimulate a complete breakdown of the systems that form our 5% reality into the impossibility of observation. And it is within these moments of unknowability that we can begin to glimpse the possibilities of realities beyond what we can understand.

## Questions

- What are the differences between state-identification and self-identification? When and how can self-identification dismantle the systems that create identities? Does self-identification ultimately reinforce the belief entities that keep us fixed in a 5%? When and how is it possible to not rely on any identification at all?
- What are the processes of identity formation? Can we locate the moments in communication when we coalesce into identities to prove our value and worth? Can we acknowledge this as a trauma affect?
- How can we embrace trauma? How can we move through the trauma of identification processes? How can we gravitate toward the discomfort of trauma and adventure within it without reliving it? Can an intense processing of trauma transform trauma into a means to expand beyond the 5%?

## Hypothesis

Paradoxically, in order to collapse identities, we need to become more intimate with them, to understand our attachment to identities, the traumas contained within them, the systems they shield us from, and the ones they pit us against. This is facilitated by locating gravitational pulls in our intra-actions, moments of heaviness and discomfort in communication that make us recoil or, conversely, lunge forward. When we feel this gravitational pull, when we feel we want to tap out of a conversation, or when we feel ourselves shifting into an identity to prove our value and worth, these are the moments that signal that we must go further in—into a rigorous observation of our attachment to identities and beliefs. The sheer concentration of energy focused into such intimate regions, increasingly lessening our distance to the trauma of identification, will eventually collapse identities, along with us, into black holes, into an impossibility of observation, and towards an infinite number of degrees of freedom.