Gender Trouble Couplets, Volume 1

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The assumption of its essential incompleteness permits that category to serve as a permanently available site of contested meaning. It might then remain incomplete.

Is it not precisely because a category is not a solidary or unbreakable unity that its oppositionality can be constructed as a coalition of heterogeneous fragments, as the very unit of women's bodies? In this sense, the possibility of a set of identities is suspended: any unitary explanation of women's experiences in terms of an essentialized idea of women, whether cisgender or transgender, remains precarious. Such an approach precludes the possibility of locating in the present historical moment a definitive conceptual form of the political. This is not to assert a new politics of difference or to insist on identity as a primary unit of analysis. Rather, it's to insist on the limits of identities as communicated, no longer constitute the theme or subject of politics, then identities can come into being.

But when the old identities are no longer the subject of our political project, the very boundary we had with others