This performative essay asks its audience to imagine the shift of perception through imagining the construct of race without the characteristic of skin tone. Asking the reader to consider race as a mindset and not a physical characteristic calls us to question the systems we live within with a new critical eye. Would our coded symbols adapt to this minor change or would our systems falter and have to change completely?

This space is used to tell a personal narrative of race, perform an altered reality of illness remission in society (Frank, 1995), and to play with power dynamics in academe between the author and editor (Derrida, 1978). Situated in the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory, I offer an autoethnographic narrative that helps explain how I was taught to understand my racial identification as a black woman with a light skin tone, or what others see as racial ambiguity. I then shift the lens to the reader by changing the body and margins of the essay, thus challenging our idea of normal. Finally, this new perspective also serves to position the reader as this paper’s editor by asking her or him to play with the delicate balance of our socially constructed systems and play with, or question, our culture’s dependency on minor characteristics.
Between the Lines: A Discussion of a Marginalized Mindset

When people first meet me they often ask my race. When I say I’m black they ask me to explain my Black experience. As you can imagine, this is difficult in a culture that understands race as a phenomenon centered on skin tone. Typically the impetus of others’ curiosity is my light skin tone and my declaration of Black. (My skin tone is light; some would describe me as Latina looking.) It was after one of these conversations that I decided to move away from verbal explanations and move toward a more visual example to explain my experience.

To achieve the goal of performing social construction through altered characteristics, I offer three approaches to understanding the socially constructed phenomenon of identity negotiation from a marginalized perspective. My intent with this performance—as with any performance—is multi-faceted, but ultimately I want to critically challenge others and myself, prompt dialogue, and, above all, play.

First, I situate this essay theoretically using the idea of social construction to help show the process of how I was socialized to understand my racial identity. Second, I juxtapose my racial negotiation with Frank’s (1995) concept of illness narratives and the remission society to explain or frame the similarities of marginalized identity negotiation from a similar-yet-different perspective. My third approach moves away from narratives altogether and positions marginality within the method of deconstruction, asking the reader to experience ideas of balance and power—not within race or illness, but in academe.

The goal of this performance is to show the frailty of our socially constructed systems. I demonstrate how one minor characteristic alteration changes the balance of power and privilege. With no radical message intended, I want to use this performance to play with Derrida’s notion of différance and the fragility of our socially constructed phenomena (Derrida, 1978, p. 279).

This performative essay can be understood as two similar, yet different, sections. In the first section I discuss race. The white margins serve as a visual frame, which represent the way I view myself in our society. It is a visual for how I, a Black woman with light skin, fit into our socially constructed culture. In the second section, my focus shifts and I began to play with other social systems from the perspective of marginality. In this second section the frame shifts and I begin to question the privileged space between the lines. By playing with this academically sacred space, I alter the socially constructed process of academic feedback and critique, thus limiting the academic tradition of negotiating with the other. It’s important for me to again articulate: The purpose of this essay is not to assign fault or place guilt. Rather, it is to showcase the fragility of systems and to work with the idea of performative writing and deconstruction. But, as I must repeat, most of all I want to “play” (Derrida, 1978). As audience to this performance I ask that you interact, ask questions, contradict, tell me of similar experiences as a woman, GLBTQ, bi-racial, physically challenged, illness survivor, or whatever marker you see as pertinent…View the margins of this essay as a statement of both social restriction and individual freedom (Tyler, 1986).
To build on this idea, I draw from Tregaskis (2004) who has used the idea of juxtaposing a socially construed X (physical disability) against what is seen as “normal” to understand the complexity of differentness in what she terms *deficit discourse*. In this work she examines the language of disability, first showing the power of language by making the intangible tangible. Second, she illustrates how through language we share disability as a deviant construction, an outlier of normalcy. From this vein of thought, it is clear to see that languaging the social construction of (X) is key to understanding the construct in question and is a generative first step in unpacking the complexity of the construction process.

**Socialization: My Blackness and Mindset**

Berger and Luckmann (1968) present social construction as a set of rules we are both born into and adapt to that eventually become invisible to us as we simultaneously work to sustain them. A key idea underlying their ideas about social construction is the rule of social order, or what humans perceive as real, but that is actually a product of human activity and communication. Hacking (1999) offers a formula to help explain this relationship by asking us to first determine the characteristics of a social construction. He asks, “What are you claiming? By using X to represent the construct or idea in question, such as race, sexuality, ability, etc…” (p. 6). Then, later, “Is it taken for granted? Could X exist on its own, or is it dependent on society to perpetuate? Does X now come to seem natural in society? And, finally, would we be better off if X were done away with?” (pp. 6-7). He goes on to suggest that once the idea is determined to be a social construct, the construct must then be examined by tracing the history of the idea and showing its origins of use or misuse.

One could look at our society’s construction of skin tone equaling racial identity as X, but in my situation skin tone does not equal my race. Therefore, skin tone and race are only part of the social rules about racial negotiation I learned to navigate as a child. For many, skin tone means certainty. To me skin tone was the source of confusion for those who wished to racially identify me. Yet still for me and my family members our skin tone allowed us the freedom to construct our own rules about what it means to be a proud Black American.

Berger & Luckmann (1968) explain the first level of socialization as primary socialization. As they articulate, “The first level of socialization as individual undergoes in childhood . . . It is at this level the child learns to become a member of a social group” (p. 130). At the primary stage of development, the child is introduced to language and labels and begins to give social meaning to the labels learned. During this stage children are also exposed to basic social rules for constructs such as *child/parent*, *nuclear family*, and *subordinate/superior*. My parents are both Black, and as a child I was taught to identify as Black if anyone asked me about my racial make-up. For many this may not be seen as strong social action for parents to teach a child. But even as a child my parents conditioned me to negotiate my ambiguity with pride and conviction – even during racial tumultuous times.

We lived in downtown Detroit for most of my formative years. Although the city in the 1960s often erupted into racial violence, I was protected. My young age and willingness to stay close to my parents allowed them to easily shield me from much of the racial anger and hatred that was common for that era. As a result of this protection my parents were able to craft a racial
experience for me that was uniquely tolerant, accepting, and empathic toward others. In addition to my parents, I credit the downtown Detroit neighborhood we lived in for shaping how I understand and negotiate my race.

In Detroit we lived in the shadow of the Fischer building where wealthy and underprivileged, Black, White, and Latinos, among other races and ethnicities, lived side-by-side or just around the corner. That is not to say we didn’t have our issues, but it never affected the way we treated our neighbors. We accepted and protected each other. Growing up in this safe and accepting area made it easy for me to understand Blackness as “just another characteristic.”

Because of my surroundings, I learned that being Black was no different than having blonde hair or brown eyes. Because of the great diversity of our neighborhood, when I did identify as Black it was not challenged or questioned. As such, at a very early age I learned not to question labels or challenge one’s identity. I was taught to let them be who they say they are. I had no boundaries placed around my or others’ racial identification. I heard people identify as Black, White, Hippy, Afro-American – and it seemed anything was accepted without question.

One of my earliest memories associated with my race was when I was around the age of seven. We had just moved from our diverse neighborhood in downtown Detroit to a suburb. It was still diverse, but it was more of a segregated neighborhood than where we last lived. For example, we lived on Warwick, where most the families were Black. One street over was where the White families lived. As children we accepted these color lines as no big deal. All the children would often gather to play freeze tag or dodge ball until someone got hurt or the street lights came on. It was in this new location that I was first confronted with racism and ideas of racial superiority. Particularly, I remember being in one of my friend’s homes as we played with our Barbie dolls.

When we got there, her father was not home. After playing for a short time, the front door slammed and the atmosphere in the home quickly changed. My friend looked up and fearfully pleaded with me. “If my dad asks, don’t tell him you’re Black, ok?” I had never known that feeling before. At first I was confused: Why would I lie to her father about being Black? I had never been asked to lie to an adult before, and that frightened me. My only experiences associated with my race prior to this were unconditional acceptance and pride. Unable to lie, I picked up my dolls and walked myself home. I can still see my friend asking me to stay and questioning me. “What’s wrong?” I could not collect my thoughts to respond in any intelligible way, but I knew I was not welcome at her home. This was the day I realized that being Black meant something different to some people. I also learned that my Blackness was unique because I did not have the Black skin that instantly and visually marked me. I had the freedom to articulate my racial identity whenever and to whomever I wanted.
Being Black: Negotiating the Margins

The complete answer to the “What are you?” question is never as simple as an unchallenged statement. For me it almost always prompts more discussion. Many scholars explain race as oppression, some offer stories of marginality or segregation by skin tone and others call our attention to the role of power and maintenance of the status quo (Akbar, 1984; Collins, 2004; Gates, 1998; Graves, 2002; Smedley, 1999; & Wu, 2002).

After the publication of my first article (Jeffries, 2002), which traced the complexity of my unique identity development process, I was repeatedly asked to tell the Black experience from my perspective. Although I politely attempted to answer this question, it was also problematic. I don’t know that mine—or any Black experience for that matter—is ever fully understood and I would question the author or authors who declare such a possibility.

Marginality Performed

My marginality is at times a series of internalized dichotomous negotiations between visibility and invisibility. Because my “Blackness” is less about looking black and more about being Black in the U.S., my mind is often forced to process multiple layers of socially constructed conflicts, sometimes labeled as “wars,” with the mainstream culture (Reed, 2003). Living between these two cultures is unique because some see whiteness as neutrality, even privileged, while Blackness is oppression.

Artists have struggled with the performance of privilege and marginality and privilege in a number of ways (Bell, 1995; Dolan, 1993; Phelan, 1993; Warren, 2001). This performance is presented as altered text to challenge the privilege found in the socially constructed characteristics, symbols, and spaces of lived experience. As a performance, this essay positions the reader experientially as I am positioned, socially, in the margins. My intent is to have this essay serve as the source of some answers to the question of how I experience Blackness from my unique perspective as outsider within, and create new questions of power negotiation.

Understanding Racial Encounters From the Margins

To aid in the understanding of the marginalized mindset, I chose to explain a personal encounter. This contextualization will assist in the comprehension of the theoretical discussion that follows. I have grown accustomed to these encounters and understand these opportunities as educating moments. In her book Fictions of Feminist Ethnography, Visweswaran (1994) advocates for the awareness, acknowledgement, and deconstruction that extends beyond the overtly seen physical characteristics. She continues by suggesting that we (implicating the whole of our culture) desire to understand the subtleties of cultural exploration when experiencing new cultures of nuances of our own. We (the whole of our culture) seek to reveal the unseen and unknown, that that is unfamiliar to us, so much so that we must concentrate to understand them completely.
Further, because the phenomenon of race is socially constructed, the language used to
describe the essences of experiencing race cannot be completely articulated. Racialized language
offers no easy description and no easy proof of its existence. Each racial experience is uniquely
linked to the individual living that experience, yet as a culture we have proof of its existence
beyond language, because our minds and eyes tell us race exists. Dolan (1993) would argue that
it is at these moments of contradiction that we are beginning to understand the truth about the
world and about our bodies in the world. She wrote, “We can claim our bodies only if we stop
claiming that they give us truth” (p. 77). I understand her argument. I do not ask my body to
reveal the (privileged) Truth. It cannot. I live as a contradiction.

The Encounter: Race in Remission

I’m feeling out of balance. I feel that there is a conversation occurring behind my
back and out of earshot, I can’t tell whose talking. But it feels like the conversation is
about me. At times like these I choose to ignore my feelings. However, I cannot ignore
the fact that now I am starting to feel cautious, insecure, threatened, I look over my
shoulder. And even the decision to ignore my intuition causes me to take pause. I feel
insecure as I glance at my purse on the front seat. I look around again and see two sets
of eyes watching me from inside the gas station.

I breathe in deeply, cautiously, a sense of familiarity takes over, comforted, I
know now that I am not in immediate physical danger. I have been in this position
before. I begin to understand I have been reacting to their gaze, their eyes on me.
Again, I choose to ignore the gazes as I pretend to not notice. Even this decision makes
me feel uneasy. I wonder to myself, should I stare back in retaliation, a game of chicken
to see who will be the first to divert their gaze. I weigh the options and figure it’s not
worth the effort or energy. I decide not to confront them this time I have chosen to
ignore, pay and go on with my day uninterrupted.

I have ignored the idea that my presence has prompted an awkward feeling to
settle in that space. Before I enter the building this is all speculation, what they were
discussing is unknown and in that moment I did not want to know. I just wanted to run
some errands. As I entered the station my mind was flooded by uncertainty, what will I
confront will they allow me to move through this space without a conversation? I felt my
intuition warning me, preparing me, something was going to happen when I walked into
the station, held tight to my cash, and braced myself.

As I opened the large glass door and stepped into the station. I broke in on their
conversation. “She’s Mexican,” he assumes. The first words I hear as the door closes
behind me. I walk to the counter, the two men smiled as they looked into my eyes. I
smile back and my instincts are confirmed, they were talking about me I no longer
wonder. They were discussing my race.

The air was light and the environment was non-threatening. They were not
ashamed to include me in their conversation. Their questions, “what are you?”
shameless and honest eased my tension, I felt my body lighten up, this was very familiar
territory for me and given their happy disposition I decided to engage in conversation by
offering a welcoming smile. I felt both privileged they chose to engage in this
conversation (race can often be interpreted as a sensitive topic leaving many to ignore
the question) and slightly offended, I wanted to say thanks for asking (so many just
stare), but at the same time, I wanted to ask, what difference does it make to you?

“Hola,” he said, the attendant was a tall, flirtatious, the perfect “Latin lover” type.
He even smelled good, which I’m sure was difficult to do, given that he worked at a gas
station. “Don’t you know Spanish?” He questioned in English, his smile faded and his
welcoming eyes turned into a questioning gaze. “No, no I’m black.” I said with a smile,
as I handed him a twenty. The older (African American) man beside him began to softly
chuckle as, his smile evolved into an audible sound. He could no longer stay silent.
“Told you man” his wise eyes looked at me. His smile was not as bright as the younger man’s smile, but it was accepting of me, so I smiled back. I looked at both men and saw a strange transfer of energy. The revelation of my race caused the smile to fade from one man’s face, and grow larger on the face of the other (a darker man)—interesting.

It was at that moment that I began to understand. My heritage, my race, was a game of chance they had played to see who would emerge the winner of the debate. I wanted to finish the transaction and leave. As the cash drawer opened the young man tried to make sense of my racial declaration. Clearly my response was not sitting well with him and what he thought represented the black race. He questioned me further. “What, like you’re mixed right?” he asked. He was persuasive and seemed confused, he was unable to fully comprehend the racial contradiction he was looking at—me. “No, I’m all black.” I responded with an upbeat, an attempt to not sound condemning. But I knew from past experience where this conversation was heading. I felt my eyes beginning to glaze over as I prepared myself, I was going to have to tell him about the one drop rule. A rule developed in our culture that served to maintain the social construction of racial segregation.

“How can that be?” he continued. This is the moment I fear the most, the moment when the conversation transitions from interaction, to lecture. “Because my parents are black,” I said, hoping he would let it go and give me my change so I could leave. “No, I mean you don’t look black,” he said. His smile came back but he was smiling because he thought I didn’t understand him. The problem was I understood him completely, and answered him correctly. “Well we know someone who thinks I do,” as I smiled and looked at my dark skinned ally, his partner the older man. As I attempted to cheerfully end the conversation and avoid ‘The Lecture,’ the older man nodded in agreement from
his relaxed stance behind the counter. He understood my answer, my desire to respectfully end the conversation, and my attempt to save face for the younger naive attendant.

I could see that this was puzzling the younger man so I decided to forget about the change for the moment and take advantage of this teaching moment. I continued to talk. As he reached to give me my change I explained. “I am black because in the U.S. there was something called the one-drop rule, a rule made back in the days of slavery to distinguish the owners from the property. Back then if you had one drop of Black African blood in you then you were black and could be owned and sold as property.” I ended the conversation with a gentle word of advice. “Trust me when I tell you not all Blacks have dark skin.”

I’m sure there’s more to my existence than this one simple rule, but this is what I usually say to give a quick explanation of my skin tone. He was still a bit confused but at this point I was tired with the conversation and wanted to leave so, I smiled, and said, “Bye guys, take care.” Understanding my desire to leave the older man smiled and tipped his head in approval. Nonverbally telling me not to worry, and with a wink he reassured me that “the lesson” would continue.

The younger man looked again, his nonverbal facial expressions revealed his amazement in what he had just experienced. I was pleased, I could see that he was beginning to view me as I Am. Not white, or Mexican but, Black. I also prayed for the day when I no longer had to convince others to believe me. Instead I wish others could just simply accept me.
An Intersection of Race and Illness Remission Society

Frank’s (1995) *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics*, offers a theoretical frame that helps to explain the complexity of my identity negotiation. He offers an example of how those whom he has labeled “the remission society” manage their covert identities (p. 9). Central to Frank’s remission society membership is the idea of representation and the notion of looking healthy but being or once being ill. Those who are part of the remission society have gone through an illness and are left with an altered way of being – either physically, mentally, or both.

Frank tells of struggles with negotiating new identities, identities that define them no longer as completely healthy. Now they must learn to identify as once healthy and currently recovered and permanently altered, if not recognizable outward an ever-present inner struggle. They are forever forced to vocalize their difference in relevant situations. The situations vary but are everyday occurrences: convenience stores with microwaves, metal detectors at airports, or curious individuals who notice a scar or any other anomaly. For example, those with pace makers must always remember to check for potential obstacles that may alter their hidden device. Those with metallic plates or apparatuses must remember to identify themselves when walking through an airport security check.

In comparison, I too must verbally identify my race when I feel it is necessary. Therefore, when juxtaposed to my encounter, Frank’s (1995) notion of illness narratives and, specifically, those stories of the remission society work nicely to help explain my own negotiation of race with my altered characteristic (my skin tone). An example of this remission society/ racial identity partnering can be seen in the words taken from the aforementioned encounter when I said, “Trust me when I tell you not all Blacks have dark skin.” This comment can be compared to the remission society member being recovered from an illness but not showing visible signs of that illness.

Frank (1995) defines postmodernism not as a bound frame, but rather as a fluid negotiation. He wrote, “The postmodern divide is crossed when people’s own stories are no longer told as secondary but have their own primary importance” (Frank, 1995, p. 7). This is what he explains in his article as the process of being once well (healthy) then unhealthy (ill) to recovered but permanently altered by the illness (remission). In this process Frank explains the mental adjustment a person makes when transitioning from healthy pre-illness to healthy post-illness as understanding a new identity: a new way of looking at the world as the world simultaneously looks at them. Those in the remission society must always be aware of their new identity. To further complicate their adjustment, this new identity they must adjust to is often tied to the stigma of illness and the cultural assumptions we make of what it is to be healthy versus ill.

Just as illness alters the way the remission society member views and/or is viewed by the world, my skin tone alters the way I view and/or am viewed by members of our culture this is due to our social construction of race. The privilege experienced by the healthy person is the life they led before their illness. Their illness has now changed their identifying markers. My experience of privilege is my skin tone and the social assumption of a predominately European
heritage. The point of comparison between remission society members and my racial declaration, is the verbal declaration of different-ness, although different phenomena, experientially remission society members and my Blackness negotiation are quite similar.

My early experiences in Detroit shaped my privileged lens. I was not taught to prioritize race nor did I connect the idea of skin tone to race. The significant others in my life (my family members and those in my downtown neighborhood) reinforced a message of non-conditional racial expression. It was only when I was forced to consider lying that I was made aware of my different-ness.

**Telling Stories: What is Normal?**

Frank (1995) wrote, “as the language of the story seeks to make the body familiar, the body eludes language” (p. 2). Paraphrasing Martin Buber (1923), he notes the body *does not use speech, yet it begets it.* We must speak for the body, and “such speech is quickly frustrated: speech presents itself as being about the body rather than of the body” (Frank, 1995, p. 2). What both remission society members and I are negotiating is the significance of declaring one’s own identity and the complexity of managing others and cultural assumptions. The story of our identity is now used as a tool, the narrative that corrects erroneous identity assumption. It is the attention to the story those in the remission society members and I rely on to help communicate our different-ness and our place in the culture. Further, it is the sharing of the story that helps solidify one’s understanding of identity and the significance of identity on our culture. Our stories tell who we are, and there is an agony in our not telling them (Angelou, 1969; Manning, 2010). Simultaneously, our ill bodies want to elude the languages our culture demands we speak.

As ill bodies elude language, they are unable to declare complete health. My body eludes the experience of Blackness by presenting as White. “The remission society is left to be either a demilitarized zone in between them, or else it is a secret society within the realm of the healthy” (Frank, 1995, p. 9). My demilitarized zone is the time between other’s racial assumptions and my racial declaration. The society I negotiate is the fluidity of my in-group/out-group racial status and the socialization of the privileges and power struggles among and within those groups.

At issue for all of us who negotiate covert identities is the desire to position one’s self comfortably between two very different identities. “In the remission society the foreground and background of sickness and health constantly shade into each other” (p. 9). The remission society member must struggle with duo identities. My racial explanation is similar in the sense that I am often perceived by others as inauthentic; therefore I am caught between looking White and being Black.

Some may ask, Why language? On illness Frank (1995) wrote, “The ill body is certainly not mute—it speaks eloquently in pains and symptoms—but it is inarticulate. We must speak for the body, and such speech is quickly frustrated” (p. 2). Frank makes a wonderful point, communication is not always external articulations, but are often the internal. When negotiating my Blackness my body speaks via language and emotion: feelings of pride, anger, happiness, guilt, insecurity and/or frustration and so on, when or even before I identify as Black, as exemplified in my encounter.
A Shift from Explanation to Exploration

In his article “The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance,” Fink (1995) wrote, “According to Lacanian theory, every human being who learns to speak is thereby alienated from her or himself—for it is language that, while allowing desire to come into being, ties knots therein, and makes us such that we can both want and not want one and the same thing, never be satisfied when we get what we thought we wanted, and so on” (p. 7). This sentence demonstrates the solipsism of language and is what I understand to be the core of Lacan’s message. It shows how language is always only a portion of the message. Words are a part of the message, yet words are never completely able to fully articulate an experience for complete comprehension by another.

The discussion of Lacan moves this essay into a different level of understanding socially constructed phenomena. Therefore, I shift from explanation toward exploration as I leap to the ideas of context, différance, and Derrida’s notion of deconstructionism. As Derrida notes, “Context is never absolutely determinable…its determination is never certain or saturated” (Derrida, 1998, p. 84).

Performing Deconstruction

Derrida’s ideas of language and the concept of deconstruction are multifaceted. I have chosen to focus on two concepts set forth by Derrida in an effort to challenge future thought on the concept of social construction and our assumptions found within those systems. This essay only scratches the surface.

The process of deconstruction, set forth by Heidegger and other deconstructionists, serves to open up new thought processes rather than reproduce. As with Derrida, I have followed Saussure and other modern linguistics to show how “language is not just words but a set of repeatable codes and how these codes make meaning” (Derrida, 1978, p. 100) and how they serve to impede understanding. As such, I seek to open up new thought by presenting provocative questions that ask us (as scholars) to question the way we have been conditioned to accept the roles of power and subordinate. I also seek to re-code the space typically reserved for editorial feedback. In other words, this re-coding is not meant to be a call to action, but rather a call to question:

Deconstruction

The function of the center was not only to orient, balance, and organize the structure—one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure—but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the play of the structure. By orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the center of a structure...
permits the play of its elements inside the total form. And even today, the notion of a structure lacking any center represents the unthinkable itself (Derrida, 1978, p. 279).

I’ve included this quotation because it serves as a marker for where I want to lead our discussion. Is this statement true? Is it really unthinkable for us to have a system with no center, no point of balance, and no reference? Like you I live within our socially constructed systems and can only see how my experiences perpetuate these systems. But my lens is altered. By changing this essay it is fun to think of new ways of negotiating the writer/editor relationship.

By limiting the assumed white space of this paper typically reserved for editorial notes, I reveal a site of struggle one might even argue a source of oppression or power. Without judgment you can now see how this space is indeed a gap; a gap where power and democracy can be negotiated by the editor and writer. “Deconstruction situates itself in the gap between all existing democracies, which are not democracies” (Caputo, 1997, p. 175).

It is this assumption or gap that fascinates me. The way our westernized training in science and philosophy, epistémé, conditions us to see an alteration of its socially constructed foundation as unthinkable, one where we are frozen, stunted, unable to move beyond – when, in fact, we have plenty of space to reproduce the editor/writer relationship. With this essay, that space is not between the lines of the essay, but only in the margins.

This simple alteration is différance. As Caputo (1997) notes, “Différence does not ‘mean’ anything at all” (p. 99), and yet in this essay it has served to silence a powerful voice. Here, as a result of différence, I play with space. By asking questions of our socially constructed systems and showing how simple alterations serve to de-center our socially created ideas of normal, we begin to play with these systems. What our play does is point to the anonymous within the system (Caputo, p. 143). I end this performative essay with an invitation to play with and within the systems around us.

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