

# REPRESENTATIONAL VIOLENCE — A Manifesto

## How normative fields erase non-representational ontologies

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### ABSTRACT

This manifesto (Artistic Research) develops the concept of representational violence — the structural elimination of non-representational ontologies through the demands of legibility. It argues that violence begins not where bodies are harmed or excluded, but at the earlier point where reality is reduced into symbolic form and permitted to exist insofar as it can be represented. Representation is not a neutral mirror of the world; it is a world-producing filter that selects, compresses, and erases.

I write from an autistic ontology, not as clinical object but as epistemic stance. Perception here retains resolution, resonance, multiplicity, simultaneity — it does not collapse into category. Autism in this manifesto is not topic, disorder, or biography: it is the instrument through which representational limits become visible.

Representational violence operates structurally: in bureaucratic classification, diagnostic procedure, legal determination, scientific modelling, and epistemic norm enforcement. What cannot be translated into symbol does not simply disappear — it is removed by design. Systems erase not through malice, but through function. They do not need hostility to eliminate ontologies; they only need to operate successfully.

Drawing on long-form institutional documentation recorded in the book *Speed's Work* (ISBN-10 : 3819277358), the manifesto demonstrates how social infrastructure generates representational doubles of people — files that stand in for bodies, diagnoses that replace perception, formats that override lived reality. In this exchange, the human does not fail to appear — the substitute succeeds.

From this foundation, I claim that diversity cannot exist under representational sovereignty. Recognition is not acceptance, but reduction; inclusion is not plurality, but controlled assimilation. If existence requires legibility, then difference survives only by shrinking.

The political demand is therefore simple and non-negotiable:  
Not more voices inside the same frame — more frames.  
Not understanding — space for realities that cannot be reduced without loss.  
Resistance here is not action — resistance is ontology.

--- SECTION 1 ---

This is not a research paper.

It does not argue, it intervenes.

It is written from inside perception rather than about it;  
from a world that cannot be reduced to symbol  
without collapsing into something smaller than itself.

I write this not to persuade, but to expose a mechanism of erasure.

Representation does not merely describe reality —  
it produces reality by eliminating the forms it cannot hold.

What cannot be compressed is not misunderstood —  
it is removed.

Introduction — Representation as the first violence:

Representation is rarely recognised as violence because it operates invisibly.

It does not appear as a blow, a prohibition, or a sanction, but as something self-evident:

as language, as administration, as science, as the assumed logic of reality.

But representation does not depict reality.

Representation reduces.

Representation selects.

Representation compresses.

Representation decides what is allowed to remain of the world.

I write this paper because I understand

that violence does not begin where a person is injured,

disenfranchised, or silenced.

Violence begins much earlier —

where a form of world is not permitted to occur

because it cannot be represented.

Representation is not a neutral tool —

it is a criterion for what is allowed to exist.

Autistic ontology forces this violence into visibility,

because I (neurodivergent) do not perceive world as a reducible data-matrix,

but as field, as resonance, as relational actuality.

I see patterns before they are linguistic.

I retain information at high resolution

where normative systems demand reduction.

I am not incomprehensible —

I am only not representable without loss.

Thus violence does not begin in social behaviour,

but in the structure of what a system calls “real.”

--- SECTION 1.2 ---

Why I speak about autism

I could formulate this theory without mentioning autism,

but then it would be bodiless, abstract, ungrounded.

I do not speak about autism to highlight exceptionalism,

but because my perceptual mode reveals exactly

where reality is destroyed through representation.

Autism here is not a medical category.

No pathology.

No deficit to be explained.

Autism is the ontology from which I write.

I retain information instead of reducing it.

I do not abstract in order to be understood —

I lose being when I abstract.

I perceive structure where normative fields see only category.

And thus my existence does not mark weakness,  
but the limit of what representational systems can process  
without killing.

Autism is not the subject.

Autism is the measurement instrument.

### 1.3 Position in Theory — Where This Work Sits (and Where It Breaks)

This work extends epistemic injustice and symbolic violence into the ontological domain.

Where Fricker describes inequity in who may be recognised as a knower,

I describe the elimination of worlds that cannot be made representable at all.

Where Bourdieu shows how language enforces hierarchy,

I show how representation itself becomes a mechanism of reality-production by exclusion.

This is not a discourse critique.

It does not analyse how speech oppresses or who may speak.

It shows how reality disappears when it must first be translated into symbol.

Epistemic injustice concerns who may be believed.

Symbolic violence concerns how classification dominates.

Representational violence concerns what may exist.

Not which subject is valued,  
but which ontology is permitted.

This manifesto therefore occupies a position beside — but not within —  
those theoretical lineages.

It shares their object (oppression)

but moves the boundary deeper, to the level where loss precedes language.

I do not critique what representation does to the already represented.

I describe what representation does to the unrepresentable.

This is a theory of ontological erasure through representational criteria.

Not the violence of misinterpretation,

but the violence of non-appearance.

#### 1.4 Why this concept could not exist before

Representational violence becomes visible only after the ontological shift I call *Seinsverschiebung* — a displacement of being from representation to resonance, from symbol to field. Without this shift, reality is assumed to exist only in the form that can be translated, named, stored. Earlier theories of injustice show who may speak, who may be believed, who may be recognised — but they do not describe what happens to worlds that do not convert.

Critical theory mapped discourse.

Disability studies mapped exclusion.

Semiotics mapped sign-systems.

None of them mapped the space before symbol.

Only when being is understood as something that does not collapse into representation does the violence of representation itself emerge. I name this realm explicitly — not identity, not cognition, not rhetoric, but ontology.

This insight did not begin here.

In earlier work I described it as the right to crisis —  
the right to fail the demand for compression without forfeiting being.

What appeared then as psychological rupture reveals itself now as ontological fact:  
a system that requires stability, legibility, and reduction turns difference  
into damage by definition.

The right to exist must include the right to remain untranslatable.

It is only from here that erasure can be seen as more than marginalisation:

as the removal of realities that cannot be flattened without death.

This manifesto stands on that ground.

It does not extend existing theory —

it reveals the terrain on which theory has always stood

but could not see.

Representational violence is thinkable because Seinsverschiebung opens the world

that representation must destroy to function.

--- SECTION 2 ---

Concept: Representational Violence

Representational violence is not psychological.

Not social.

Not moral.

It is ontological.

It operates where reality is produced:

in models, in forms, in diagnoses, in statistics, in language.

What cannot be translated into symbol

is not stored, not legitimised, not administrated.

Representational violence means:

reality exists only when it is representable.

And what is not representable

is not simply overlooked —

it is excluded from existence.

Not misinterpreted —

pushed out of world.

Representation is not a medium of communication,

but an ordering method that transforms being

into manageable material.

Representation is always reductive — not by malfunction, but by design.

A representation is smaller than what it represents. All symbol systems operate through loss: signal extracted from field, category extracted from variation. To name is to remove difference until one shape fits many bodies.

Non-representational perception holds the inverse structure:

it does not reduce the field to symbol, but experiences pattern as event.

Where representation collapses multiplicity into concept, autistic ontology retains granularity — the detail that normativity amputates.

--- SECTION 3 ---

Normative Fields — the machinery of smoothing

Society is not dialogue —

society is an information filter.

Systems stabilise themselves

by reducing, unifying, sorting.

Not out of malice —

out of architecture.

Social order requires compression.

But compression is loss.

Autistic ontology (my world-access) — Normative field (system logic)

- preservation of complexity — flattening of complexity
- resonance, pattern, process — symbols, categories, derivation
- perception as real-time — perception as dataset
- multiplicity & ambiguity — unity & clarity
- being — representation

I am not excluded because people do not understand me.

I am excluded because my form of world  
cannot be reduced to representation without destruction.

Normative fields require compatibility.

I embody structure.

Compatibility exists only through self-diminution.

Thus representational violence is not an exception —  
it is the operating system of modern world-production.

--- SECTION 4 ---

Autistic ontology as counter-evidence

I do not refute representation with argument,

I refute it by existing.

As long as I perceive as I perceive,  
there exists a form of world  
that does not dissolve into symbols.

I feel patterns not through language,  
but before language.

Knowledge does not emerge through explanation,  
but through contact.

Representation, for me, is a process of loss.

Masking is self-compression.

Burnout is the energetic and ontological price  
of reducing myself in order to remain compatible.

Burnout is not overload —  
it is the end of an ontology inside the body.

I do not break because I am weak,  
I break because representation demands  
that I be smaller than I am.

I adapt by reducing myself.

I survive by losing coherence.

The system functions when my being disappears.

This is the political truth no one names.

--- SECTION 5 ---

Institutional erasure — field evidence from "Speed's Work"

My book Speed's Work is not autobiography.

It is an archive of ontological erasure,  
a long-duration record of how institutions  
replace reality with representation.

Jobcenters, diagnostic systems, courts, authorities —  
they did not overlook me,  
they replaced me.

Not because they failed to understand,  
but because my form of world  
could not be entered into representational infrastructure.

The file existed instead of me.

The diagnosis spoke instead of perception.

Administration did not reflect reality —  
it substituted it.

Representation produces a double —  
and replaces the body with the document.

In Speed's Work I documented one case that still functions as proof:  
A Jobcenter once requested documentation of my medical condition.  
I sent perception — they required representation.

Instead of lived sensory overload, the file accepted only a checkbox.

Instead of relational cognition, only diagnosis code remained.

The system did not deny my reality;  
it replaced it with a faster, flatter one.

The official record now contains “reduced stress tolerance.”

Nowhere is the experience of world-collapse through compression recorded.

Bureaucracy did not fail — it succeeded perfectly,  
and reality disappeared in the process.

What is not in the form does not exist.

What is not measurable is not true.

What is not representable may not appear.

This is not negligence.

It is precise and structural violence.

Representational logic does not need intent —

only function.

I witnessed how systems erase without hatred:

not by refusing me,

but by processing me correctly.

What could not be compressed

was removed from reality.

--- SECTION 6 ---

Why diversity cannot exist under representational conditions

Diversity exists only theoretically

as long as all forms of life must be representable

in order to count as life.

“Inclusion” means not plurality,

but assimilation to representational formats.

“Participation” does not mean being,

but successful self-compression into legible form.

I may be permitted to exist —  
but only if I first make myself compatible.

Diversity under representational authority  
is not plurality — it is formatting.

I do not want a place inside the frame.  
I want world that does not require a frame.

Not variety within norm,  
but world beyond the reach of representation.

Diversity is not a social value —  
it is an ontological structure that representation destroys.

Plurality is possible only  
where worlds do not have to collapse into legibility.

--- SECTION 7 ---

Masking and burnout — the destruction of ontology in the body

Masking is not a strategy.

Masking is collapse.

Masking is the forced compression of lived perception into symbol  
until structure disappears.

Burnout is not overstimulation,  
but the destruction of perceptual integrity.

I do not lose energy —

I lose world.

I lose the field in which meaning arises.

I lose the form of being through which contact exists.

Burnout is not “too little resilience,”  
but “too much being inside a world too small to hold it.”

Because I hold world instead of modelling it,  
adapting does not exhaust me physically —  
it consumes ontology.

Masking is self-rounding to fit a frame.

Burnout is what happens

when the remaining space becomes too small

for the reality I must compress myself into.

Burnout is not fatigue —

it is ontological death-by-representation.

--- SECTION 8 ---

Post-representational politics

I do not want improved representation.

I do not want inclusion policies, awareness campaigns, accessibility reforms.

These intervene too late —

they operate after compression has already occurred.

I want systems that do not require world to be converted

before it may appear.

Politics becomes free only

when reality does not need to translate itself

in order to exist.

Not more voices inside the same frame —

“more frames.”

Not integration,

but adjacency.

Not representation,

but coexistence of incompatible ontologies.

Plurality is not variation of one format.

Plurality is a condition in which formats multiply

without collapsing into each other.

I do not want to be understood.

I want a world in which understanding is not the price of existence.

Real diversity begins

not with tolerance,

but with “ontological generosity.”

Not by broadening the table,

but by dissolving the table

so that worlds no longer need to share shape.

A post-representational society would not standardise experience.

It would allow parallel ontologies to operate without translation.

Not integration — adjacency.

Not recognition — coexistence.

Not one frame widened — many frames sovereign.

In such a system, communication is not forced through sameness.

Contact does not require conversion.

Coordination emerges through resonance, not equivalence.

--- SECTION 9 ---

Political demand — more reality than administration can carry

What I demand is not acceptance,

but ontology.

Not a seat at the table,

but a room without table, without format, without translation.

What I demand is not consideration,

but the end of representational monopoly

over what counts as real.

Plurality begins

when incompatibility is no longer a death sentence.

I do not demand to be recognised —

I demand space for realities

that representation cannot carry.

The right to exist cannot depend on being representable.

No being should have to reduce itself in order to be real.

I do not seek to be understood.

I seek the end of representation as the price of existence.

Let there be worlds that do not reduce into one another.

Let there be perception that does not collapse to symbol.

Let there be bodies that do not have to lie to survive.

This is not an academic position.

This is an ontological fact.

As long as only the representable is allowed to live,

resistance is not discourse —

resistance is the continuation of reality.

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