Not Allowed : Practicing Process

by

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Abstract

Not Allowed: Practicing Process is a response to my dissatisfaction with the status quo of architectural pedagogy as I have experienced it. By shifting attention away from the architectural product and onto the process, I redefine the thesis project's success through encounters of learning, struggle, and uncomfortable ambiguity.

The project explores ideas of co-authorship, building practice, and embedding meaning in architectural pedagogy and work. It has challenged concepts such as the urgency of production, the erasure of identity in pedagogy and practice, and the systemic harm architecture perpetuates on both the personal and on the global scale. To carry out the thesis's goals, I armed myself with tools like self-reflection, expectation of change, intentional conversation, and curiosity. The work allowed for topic change, dramatic restructuring, and lapses in rigor. It found value in opening multiple paths and diverging from linearity, although it accepts that the effort expended has been cumulative.

Instead of a thesis review, the project culminated in a thesis reflection where I asked attendees to partake in a small group discussion and share their thoughts on provided prompts. The results of the process look like an intentionally organized collection of thoughts and conducted discussions that raise more questions than they answer.

I have identified guiding questions on this thesis journey, such as: What ways of thinking are privileged in architecture? What modes of production are validated? What do I limit myself to when I am bound by architecture's definition of rigor? How much energy should I spend gaining validation? What are the criteria for failure? What if the ways I derive value in my work devalue my project in the normative discipline? Does that matter? If we make better work when we are full and present, what do we need to be full and present? If the social contracts we hold outside of architecture education spaces are constantly violated, what new social contracts must we build? How can we preserve them? If the pedagogy has not been serving me as I need it to, how have I been working to develop infrastructure for myself? How can I continue to do so moving forward?

Thesis Supervisor: Rosalyne Shieh
Assistant Professor of Architecture

All images and text by the author, unless otherwise stated. The work was produced for the Master of Architecture Thesis at the MIT School of Architecture and Planning.

Table of Contents

NOT ALLOWED : PRACTICING PROCESS
PROJECT PHASES

CENTER MY BODY IN THE DESIGN PROCESS
TOPIC CHOICE IS SECONDARY

BUILD TOOLS TO IDENTIFY HOW AND WHAT I WANT TO WORK ON
PINPOINT MY RELUCTANCE TO PURSUING A THESIS PROJECT

CENTER THE PROCESS NOT THE PRODUCT
WHAT IS MY RELATIONSHIP TO MAKING?

FACILITATE A CONVERSATION RELEVANT OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA
HOW CAN THIS SERVE MY FUTURE PRACTICE?

FACILITATE A SPACE FOR MUTUAL REFLECTION
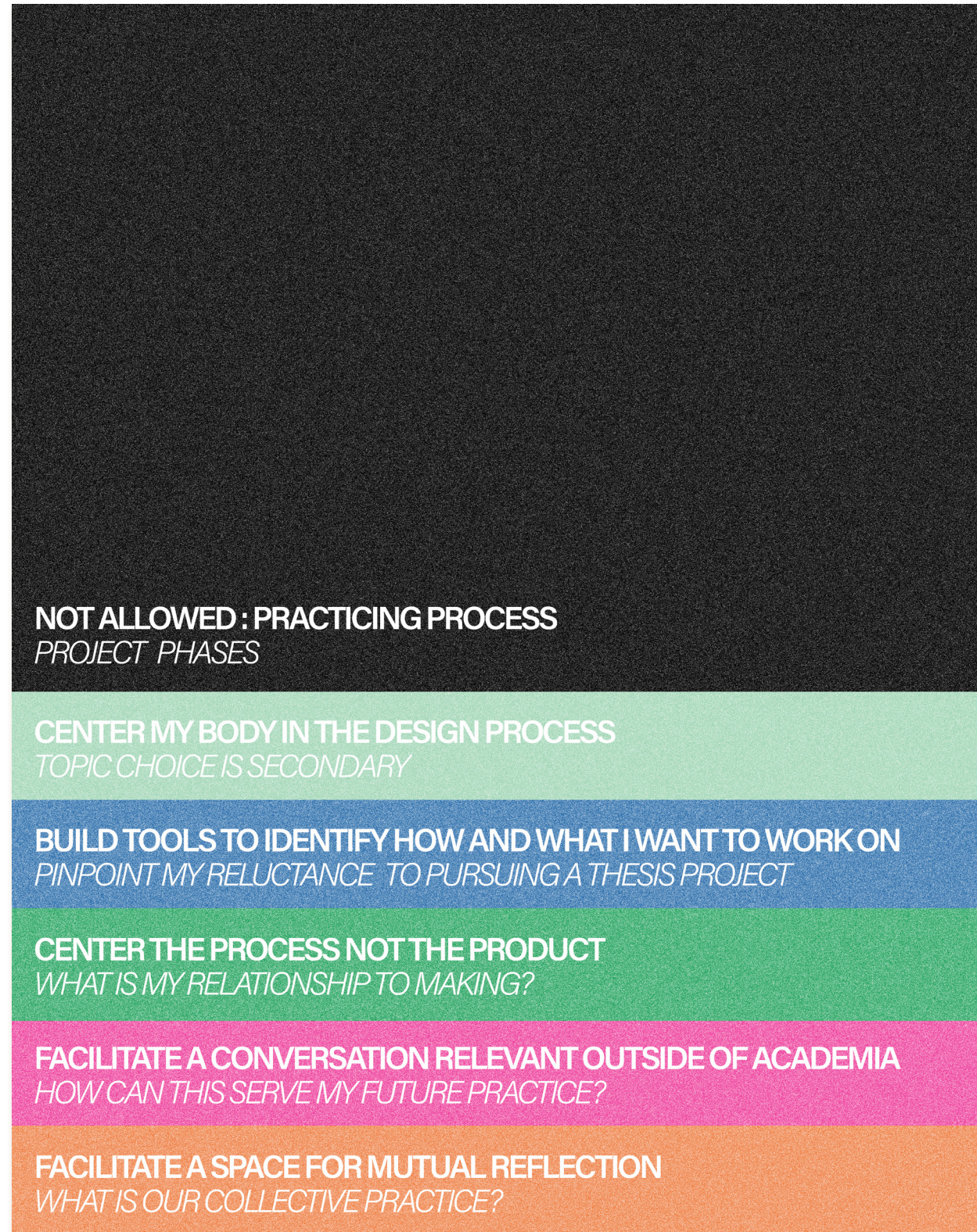*WHAT IS OUR COLLECTIVE PRACTICE?*

Fig 1. Project Phases

Not Allowed: Practicing Process

The title of this thesis is *Not Allowed: Practicing Process*. The project embraces the trajectory granted by centering process over product. Within the work, there is space to practice building practice.

Introduction

The thesis book unpacks the project through phases. Each phase allowed me to move towards the whole through a repeated process of shedding and reintegrating ideas. Along the way, my thesis transformed from a performance for the benefit of an architectural legacy to an earnest attempt to tackle the inadequacies I identified in architect pedagogy. In the thesis, I offer alternative methods of practicing, grounded in self-reflection. I created new learning goals for myself and defined the project's success through encounters of learning, struggle, and uncomfortable ambiguity. The work allowed for topic change, dramatic restructuring, and lapses in rigor. It found value in opening multiple paths and diverging from linearity, although it accepts that the effort expended has been cumulative.

Ultimately, the project explores ideas of co-authorship, building practice, and embedding meaning in architectural pedagogy and work. Instead of a thesis review, the project culminated in a thesis reflection where I asked attendees to partake in a small group discussion and share out. The results of the process look like an intentionally organized collection of thoughts and conducted discussions that raise more questions than they answer.

HOW CAN DESIGN BE UTILIZED TO MANIPULATE SOCIAL CONTRACTS AND ACCOMMODATE UNMET NEEDS IN PUBLIC SPACE? AM I MAKING A STATEMENT ABOUT CRITICAL HOW CAN WE SHAPE A WORLD THAT DOES NOT DISTORT US? ACTION? AM I UNINTER- AM I INTERESTED IN VALUE SIGNALING? ESTED IN THE TOPIC OR THE THESIS PROCESS? HOW AM I GOING TO MAKE MYSELF DO THIS? CAN ARCHITECTURE AID IN SHAPING COMMON SENSE? CAN ARCHITECTURE REFLECT OR INFLUENCE COMMON I NEED TO KEEP IMAGINING WHAT I WANT. SENSE? WHY AM I INTERESTED IN STUDYING THE SIGNALS EMBEDDED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT? WHAT DO I THINK I'M NOT ALLOWED TO DO, LEARN, THINK, PRACTICE IN ARCHITECTURE

CENTER MY BODY IN THE DESIGN PROCESS
TOPIC CHOICE IS SECONDARY

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PINPOINT MY RELUCTANCE TO PURSUING A THESIS PROJECT

CENTER THE PROCESS NOT THE PRODUCT
WHAT IS MY RELATIONSHIP TO MAKING?

FACILITATE A CONVERSATION RELEVANT OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA
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FACILITATE A SPACE FOR MUTUAL REFLECTION
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Fig 2. Project Phases

Center My Body in the Design Process

This phase of the project comprises two conceptual threads of thoughts, one of which centers on public space and the mutual agreements in which design is complicit. The other is the potential for bathrooms to serve as a medium for transferring value into design.

Topic choice is secondary.

Entering the thesis semester, I had intended to complete a sited-design project proposal that brings into question the role of architecture in the social contract that governs public space. When starting work, I encountered immediate resistance within myself to pursue the topic. Through the feedback from my committee, I situated that feeling as my reluctance to invest in a subject chosen to appeal to an audience other than myself. Consequently, I reselected a topic (and felt quite scandalous doing so) that has reappeared in many of my projects: the bathroom. After dedicating myself to several design exercises and making what appeared to me as progress, my committee observeded that I still did not appear invested in what I presented. They challenged me to find joy in my work, encouraging me to define my audience and accept that my expectations for a thesis are a contract. Moving forward, it became crucial to address the underlying questions about why this work was so draining. Is my disinterest stemming from the topics, or are my qualms with the pedagogy surrounding the thesis project, perhaps even the discipline as a whole?

Key terms / concepts

- mutual agreements / perceptions of them effect our confidence + empowerment to claim public space in a way that fits our needs.

- when mutual agreements are violated the consequences can range from mild curiosity, alteration, verbal harassment, to policing and violence

- known response are empowering
- written / rules / policy / law are often not reflective of the needs / preferences of the public
- unspoken patterns / repeated acceptions to the "rules" are the creation of new mutual agreements
- groups are allowed more exceptional social activity with less consequences and / or acceptance

Questions

- what are examples of appropriation of public space that push the boundaries of our mutual agreements?

- How do people respond to those breaches / intrusions?

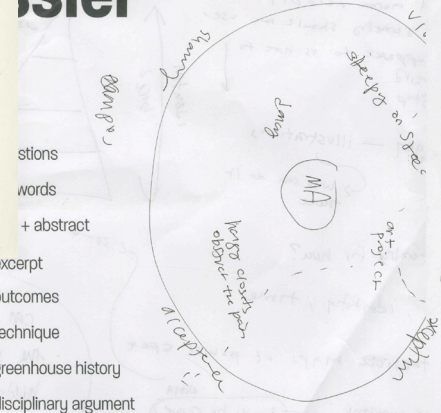- Can you name an unspoken rule of public space

Week topics
· site
· old project + world

The unspoken rules or mutual social agreements ~~define~~ regulate how we occupy public space.

The unspoken rules or mutual social agreements ~~define~~ regulate how we occupy public space.
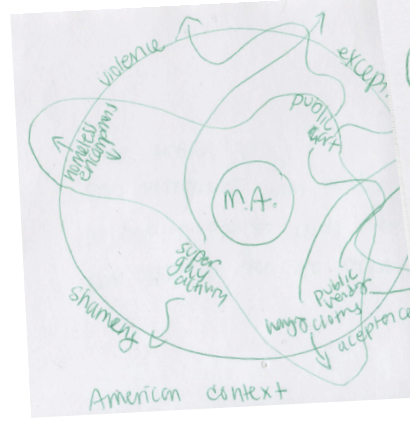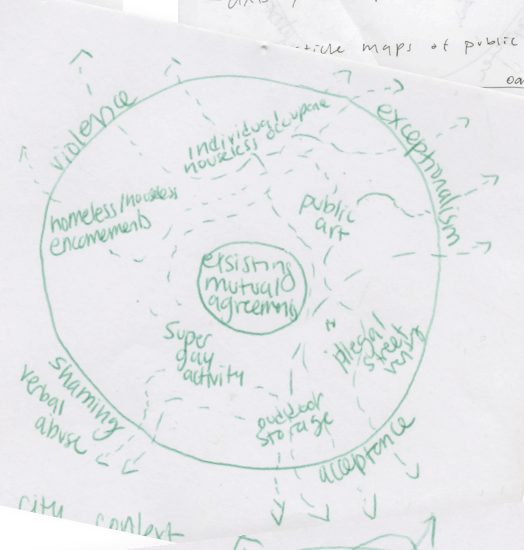
tin Brazier
ssier

ctions
words
+ abstract

04 excerpt
05 outcomes
06 technique
07 greenhouse history
08 disciplinary argument
09 references - contemporary architecture
10 references - contemporary agriculture

Thesis meeting Rosalyne + Justin

- characters →
- research now design now purpose
- MA behaviors
  societal norm accept
  as how strong should the user...
- this guy — illustrations
- do I generalize for him?
- axis, identity, time

existing mutual agreement
violence   exceptionalism
homeless/houseless encampments   public art
shaming   illegal street vending
super gay activity   outdoor storage
verbal abuse   acceptance

American city context

M.A.

American context

Fig 3. Phase 1 Physical Archive

12   13

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO WANT TO DO? DO I WANT TO PRODUCE KNOWLEDGE? HOW CAN THIS PROJECT GIVE ME ENERGY? DO I LIKE THIS PROJECT? DO I CARE **HOW CAN WE SHAPE A WORLD THAT DOES NOT DISTORT US?** ABOUT THIS PROJECT? AM I INTERESTED IN VALUE SIGNALING? I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD ALREADY KNOW WHAT MY OUTCO- **CAN THE BATHROOM SERVE AS A MEDIUM** ME IS, IS THAT THE POINT? HOW CAN THE BATHROOM, AS AN ARCHITECTURAL MANIFESTATION OF VALUES, *I NEED TO KEEP IMAGINING WHAT I WANT.* SANCTIONED RELATIONSHIPS, AND AUTHORITY, BE A MEDIUM TO PRESENT A DESIGN NARRATIVE? WHAT DO I THINK I'M NOT ALLOWED TO DO, LEARN, THINK, PRACTICE IN ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL? HOW **WHAT DO I WANT FOR MYSELF AND HOW DO I GET THAT?** CAN I APPLY BATHROOM THINKING?

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PINPOINT MY RELUCTANCE TO PURSUING A THESIS PROJECT

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HOW CAN THIS SERVE MY FUTURE PRACTICE?

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Fig 4. Project Phases

Build Tools to Identify How I Want to Work and What I Want to Work On

This phase of the process constitutes an absorption of knowledge. Time is spent listening to and speaking with peers and practitioners about their work.

Pinpoint my reluctance to pursuing a thesis project.

Throughout this phase, I felt the pressure to pursue a certain kind of rigor valued in architecture education. While I invested my time in conversations and engaging with meaningful concepts, only some of these conversations felt explicitly part of "the work." Working through ideas such as the need for architectural "rigor receipts" in conversation proved foundational to framing the larger body of thesis work. In other discussions, I felt I was using my engagement as an excuse not to do a thesis project. During this period, I intentionally left campus on weekends and attended the Black in Design Conference at Harvard and the National NOMA conference. Through expanding my exposure to the architecture community, I found a pedagogical opportunity to align what I learned from practitioners in the field grappling with similar concepts into this work. I understood the value of providing myself with enough time to learn and process new information. My challenge was to find a means to frame this learning as an additive, not another impediment, for my thesis.

Fig 5. Phase 2 Physical Archive

WHAT NEEDS ARE NOT BEING ADDRESSED? WHY IS MY RESISTANCE TO THE THESIS PROCESS USEFUL TO DOCUMENT? HOW CAN **HOW CAN WE SHAPE A WORLD THAT DOES NOT DISTORT US?** I USE MY RELATIONSHIPS TO LEARN WITHOUT MAKING THEM VULNERABLE TO MY ACADEMIC PRESSURE? CAN THE BATHROOM SERVE AS A MEDIUM TO FACILITATE THAT EXCHANGE? HOW DO I ASK FOR A COLLABORATION? CAN MY *I NEED TO KEEP IMAGINING WHAT I WANT.* PRESENTATION BE A DIALOGUE? WAS EXERCISING RELIEF PRODUCTIVE? CAN IT NOT BE A CONVERSATION, BUT A PRACTICE? WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE **WHAT DO I WANT FOR MYSELF AND HOW DO I GET THAT?** ARCHITECTURAL SCALE? HOW IS THIS CONVERSATION DIFFERENT FROM THE LAST?

CENTER THE PROCESS NOT THE PRODUCT
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Fig 6. Project Phases

Center The Process Not The Product

This phase of the project is the moment of transition from my pursuit to uncovering my motivation for working and centering the thesis process over the thesis product.

What is my relationship to making?

As a tool to mentally separate what I wanted to do from what I felt like I was required to do, I found myself empowering the voice in my head that was dictating how I prescribed I "should" be working. To give the narrative a name, I coined the term "Architecture Police in Our Head" or A.P.I.O.H. I used this personification to flush out who I was projecting a conversation with, and what they had to say. By identifying what I was reacting to, I could highlight which train of thought was not immediately reactionary to this A.P.I.O.H. voice. In tandem with developing a filter, I worked to actualize the narratives that differentiated themselves from those created in response to the A.P.I.O.H.. The actions determined by these impulses generated energy to continue working. At this juncture, I still held onto the idea that I would participate in the normative design process to design with and for my peers. I situated the bathroom as a design language I could use as a bridge to collaborate and enter my classmate's projects.

Fig 7. Phase 3 Physical Archive
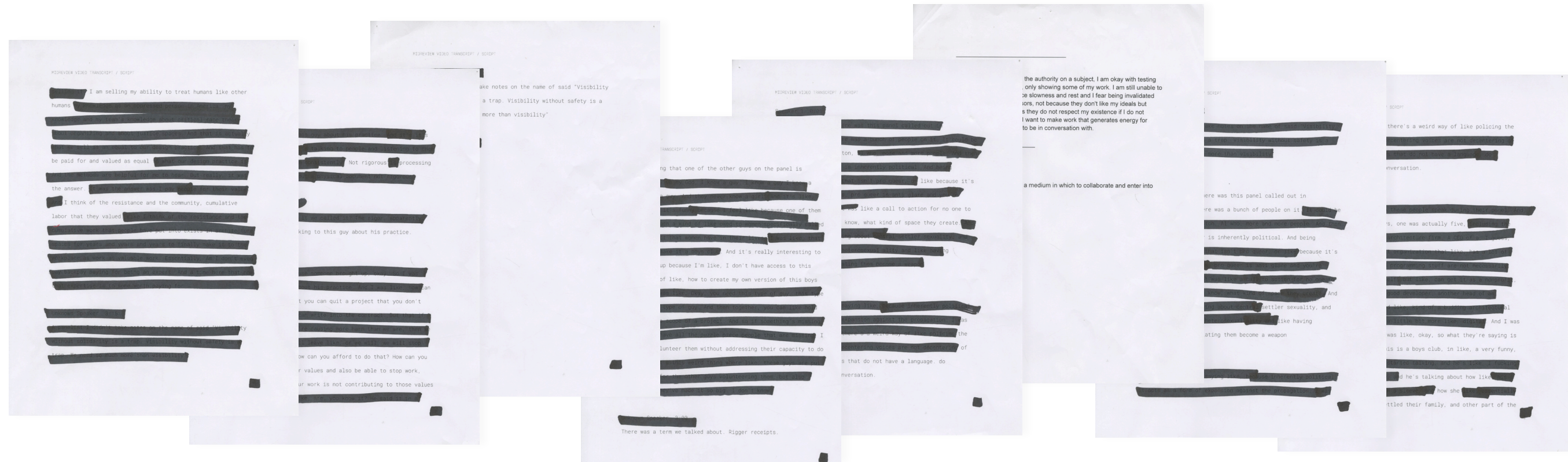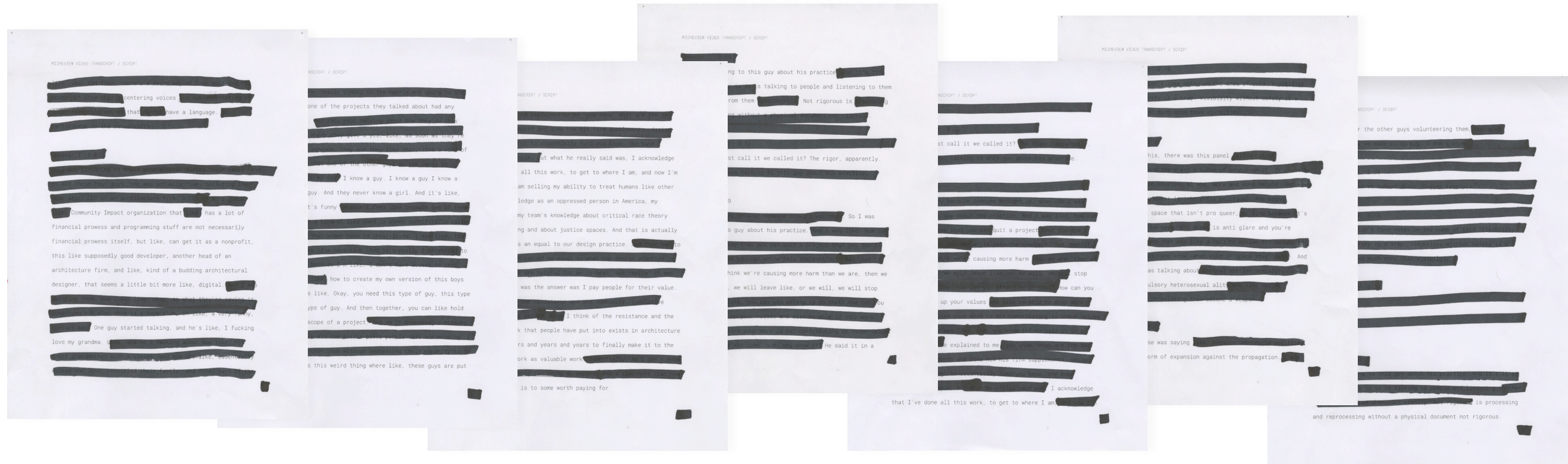
Fig 7. Phase 3 Physical Archive

Fig 9. Photography By Chenyue "xdd44" Dai

During this phase, I started experimenting with sharing my disposition about the thesis process with a wider audience.

At the midterm review, I began my speech with what one might describe as a vulnerable manifesto.

"As I was deciding what to say today, I was initially framing the presentation as a performance. Act out the thesis-thing, do what they want so I can get through the conversation without having to justify why I should be able to take up space this way. But I have been reminded recently that silence gives energy to the status quo, so I have decided to let you in on my process in the hopes that I can provide helpful language or connection.

I do not think one project should serve as the defining factor of a person's academic career, nor do I find nourishment in living in constant imbalance – focused on making products to prove my thoughts have value. But, even while standing confidently in my statements, while I am present here I am not immune to the daily pressure and the pressure of moments of collection and presentation. With this as context, I have pursued multiple iterations and investigations of what I could do in my power to make this work feel like my own and not a product or extracted piece of labor for this institution.

One of the strategies I have learned as a means to gain ownership over my time at the school is to value my work no matter the form. To treat my navigation of this place and the tools that I have learned to cope as work that should be acknowledged. For the first part of my thesis, I have been situating myself in relation to the discipline as I experience it and translating that experience into modes of practice. I have been creating frameworks for thinking about practice that I plan to use in the second half of my thesis, where I will design with and for."

I instantiated a practice I would continue in my group throughout the semester of clearly setting up the audience's expectations for the scheduled time we shared together.

"I will walk you now through two collections of media. I will then say a few more words and then open the room for discussion. Anyone may speak."

To end the speech and set the tone for the discussion, I worked to soften my language and humanize the motive for the media I presented.

"I am okay with not being the authority on a subject, I am okay with testing and incomplete drafts, only showing some of my work. I am still unable to figure out how to embrace slowness and rest and I fear being invalidated by my peers and professors, not because they don't like my ideals but because of how it signals they do not respect my existence if I do not enrich their experience. I want to make work that generates energy for myself and those I want to be in conversation with."

In these presentation excerpts, I am negotiating how much to share about myself and my process and how much the presented media will prompt on its own. Using floating boards to enclose the room to limit scale, I began exploring the space-making possibilities. By asking non-reviewers to speak, I interrupted the power dynamics of the space. To allow the conversation to carry beyond the review, I provided materials for distribution and later consumption.

Though I did not expect it, the presented media solicited a strong response from attendees. In the resulting conversation, the attendees provided information that, both helped me understand what I was doing, and also, how wildly my work could be misinterpreted. The review prompted me to embrace the potential impacts of framing a conversation.

This phase resulted in two distinct collections of media. The informational pamphlet and poster series is the result of personifying the A.P.I.O.H., and the video and script-turned-poem that mashes up observations of process and a conversation with myself about critical concepts I was learning and synthesizing this semester.

As previously discussed, one tool I used to filter through my various motives' work was personifying the A.P.I.O.H.

Who are the architecture police in our head (A.P.I.O.H.)?

To put it simply, the Architecture Police In Our Head are the perceived and tangible manifestations of the capitalist, heteronormative patriarchy that live inside of us. They police our brains before the

outside world gets the opportunity. Some signals we can use to recognize when they are on patrol are when we feel a sense of unwarranted urgency, a need to create quantity over quality, or discount the work we do that doesn't immediately lead to concrete products.

The A.P.I.O.H. feel threatened by:

Self-reflection, thinking without producing, slowing down, resting, intersectionality, co-authorship, accepting many right answers, a lack of interest in maintaining authority, de-prioritizing work, old ideas, and challenging the power structures that govern our daily lives.

Why would we want to appease the A.P.I.O.H.?

1. To give ourselves space to do the work we really want to do.

2. To protect our topic, identity, or previous expertise from being invalidated and, therefore, limit discourse around said topic or identity.

3. To get a grant, scholarship, job, or otherwise be in good standing in normative society.

4. We are tired and want more time to rest without being penalized by the aforementioned systems that often govern our daily lives.

Strategies to appease the A.P.I.O.H.:

Receipts or it didn't happen. Excessive labor is not enough for the architecture police if we do not document it. Even If we have had 100 hours of conversations, it does not matter if we do not have a transcript recording it.

Curate the work or at least create the appearance of intentional curation. The more particular, the better.

Incorporate multiplicity. If our thought challenges the status quo, we will need to prove it should be taken seriously. As a rule of thumb, one example is too subjective, two is just a comparison, but three is proof that our investment of time and energy is substantial and objective.

Fig 11. Phase 3 Physical Archive

What the A.P.I.O.H. considers rigorous:

1. Trace over things
2. Scan and print things you have already scanned and printed
3. Use expensive materials
4. Print big drawings
5. Layer paper
6. Make the same thing in a bunch of different medium
7. Incorporate the (already deemed) official
8. Accessorize (folders, binder clips, annotation)
9. Discretize (isolate into discrete parts)
10. Coin a term
11. Give it (event, space, project, series of objects) a name
12. Create a mock-up
13. Capitalize everything
14. Not do the things, but do one of them great
15. Remake things that already exist
16. Adopt or pseudo-adopt the expertise of another discipline
17. Make a book
18. Document labor, order of preference (line, written word, anything else)
19. Signal your attention to detail (arrange evenly on a surface, add margins, use dividers, frame, border, space evenly, number pages, border, align)
20. Categorize, index, itemize, catalog
21. Declare that your work is complete
22. Manually do what you could do with a machine
23. Make tiny models
24. Provide an excessive amount of detail about something that may or may not matter
25. Reference and authority figure (ex., The Venice Biennale)
26. Make an axon
27. Ask a two-part question
28. Photograph models in extreme lighting
29. Use acronyms heavily.
30. Turn nouns into verbs

While accommodating the non-reactionary voice in my head, I started to pick up a camera and record my peers. I had existing relationships with those I videotaped and some knowledge of their motives, bodily states, and how their actions contribute to a larger work. I talked to them while I recorded. It became an opportunity to engage. I was interested in whether these goals were worth their pain and toil. Afterward, for some, they were, and for others, they were not. To morph the videos into appropriate deliverables for midreview presentation, I tried a method of working my thesis advisor offered to me, which was a conversation with myself. I superimposed these two ways of working and had a curious end product.

Fig 12. "Practice" Still

0 minutes 34 seconds

Fig 13. "Practice" Redacted Script

"Not rigorous_____ processing and reprocessing _____ _____ _____ But anyway, I was talking to this guy about his practice. _____ _____ _____ _____ you say that you can quit a project that you don't believe in, _____ _____ _____ _____ _ And I'm like, How can you afford to do that? How can you afford to hold up your values and also be able to stop work, when you feel like your work is not contributing to those values anymore? "

MIDREVIEW VIDEO TRANSCRIPT / SCRIPT

~~Speaker 1 0:00~~

~~So I was talking to this guy about his practice. And it's it's~~

~~not rigorous as usual. It's talking to people and listening to them~~

~~and learning from them consistently.~~ Not rigorous at processing

and reprocessing ~~without a physical document not rigorous.~~

~~Unknown Speaker 0:33~~

~~What did we just call it we called it? The rigor, apparently.~~

But anyway, I was talking to this guy about his practice.

~~Speaker 1 0:49~~

~~And it was funny because someone brought up, okay. So I was~~

~~talking to this guy about his practice. And I was like, how can~~

you? You say that you can quit a project that you don't

believe in, ~~that you can write into the contract. But that if~~

~~we're, if we think we're causing more harm than we are, then we~~

~~will just like, we will leave like, or we will, we will stop~~

~~work.~~ And I'm like, How can you afford to do that? How can you

afford to hold up your values and also be able to stop work,

when you feel like your work is not contributing to those values

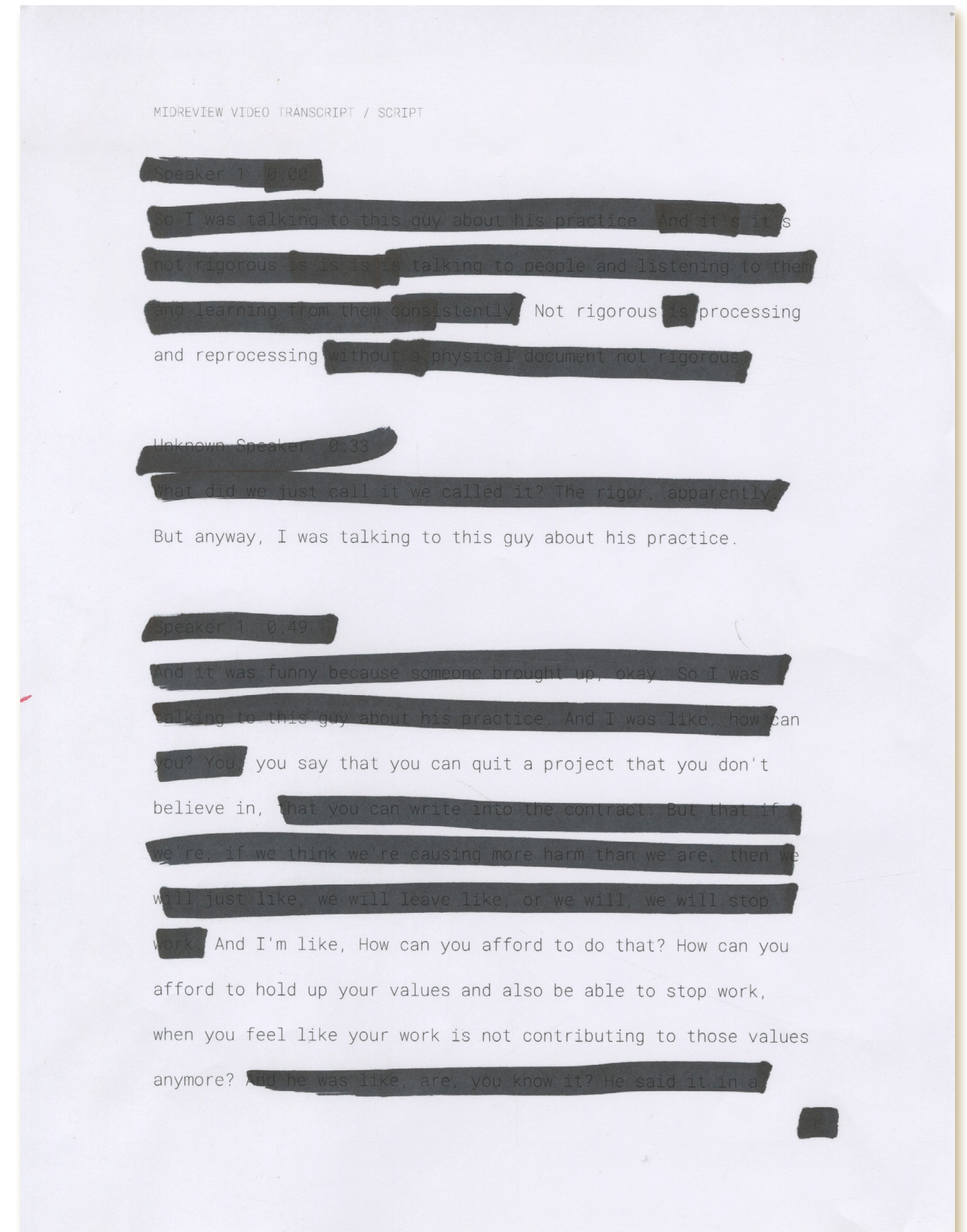anymore? ~~And he was like, are you know it? He said it in a~~ ~~■~~

Fig 14. "Practice" Still

5 minutes 43 seconds

Fig 15. "Practice" Redacted Script

"skill or thing that one of the other guys on the panel is_____
_____
_____
_____ And it's really interesting to see it show up because I'm like, I don't have access to this information of like, how to create my own version of this boys club. _____
_____
_____
_____ I needed to volunteer them without addressing their capacity to do stuff. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____ There was a term we talked about. Rigger receipts."

MIDREVIEW VIDEO TRANSCRIPT / SCRIPT

skill or thing that one of the other guys on the panel is

~~they're like, Oh my God, I know a guy, I know a guy, I know a guy, I know a guy. And they never know a girl. And it's like, obvious, but it's funny because I feel like because one of them did such a such a kind of like owed to women specifically called out the impact that women have in their lives. I was like, that doesn't not make it a boys club.~~ And it's really interesting to see it show up because I'm like, I don't have access to this information of like, how to create my own version of this boys club. ~~And I was like, Okay, you need this type of guy, this type of guy, this type of guy. And then together, you can like hold data for like scope of a project. And so if something's missing, you need to have all the puzzle piece people that are missing.~~ I needed to volunteer them without addressing their capacity to do stuff. ~~And it's this weird thing where like, these guys are put on the back for the other guys volunteering them, but also that's how they've made it so big. I don't know.~~

~~Unknown Speaker 3:00~~
There was a term we talked about. Rigger receipts.
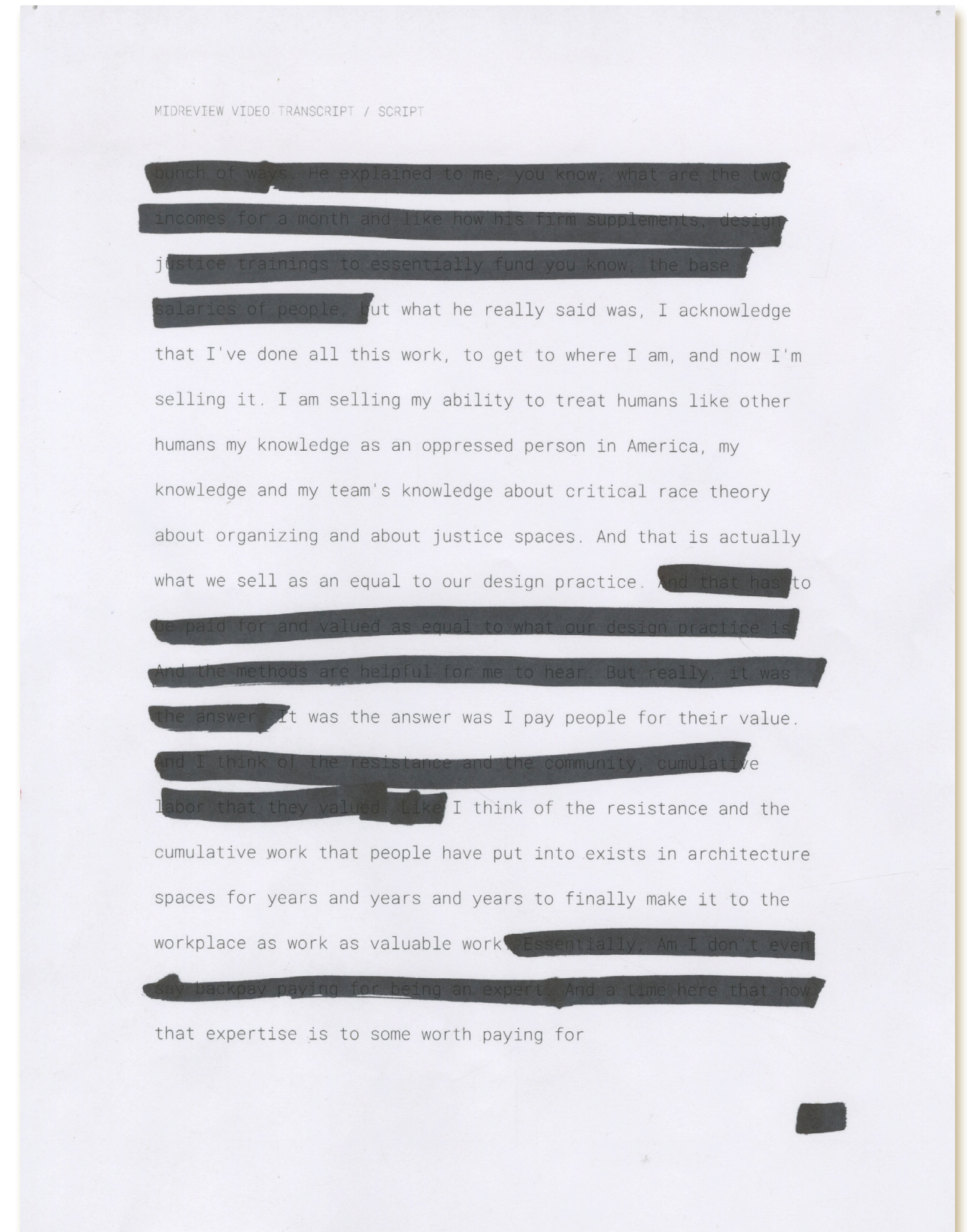
Fig 16. "Practice" Still

4 minutes 12 seconds

Fig 17. "Practice" Redacted Script

"what he really said was, I acknowledge that I've done all this work, to get to where I am, and now I'm selling it. I am selling my ability to treat humans like other humans my knowledge as an oppressed person in America, my knowledge and my team's knowledge about critical race theory about organizing and about justice spaces. And that is actually what we sell as an equal to our design practice. _____ _____ ___ It was the answer was I pay people for their value. _____ _____ I think of the resistance and the cumulative work that people have put into exists in architecture spaces for years and years and years to finally make it to the workplace as work as valuable work _____that expertise is to some worth paying for "
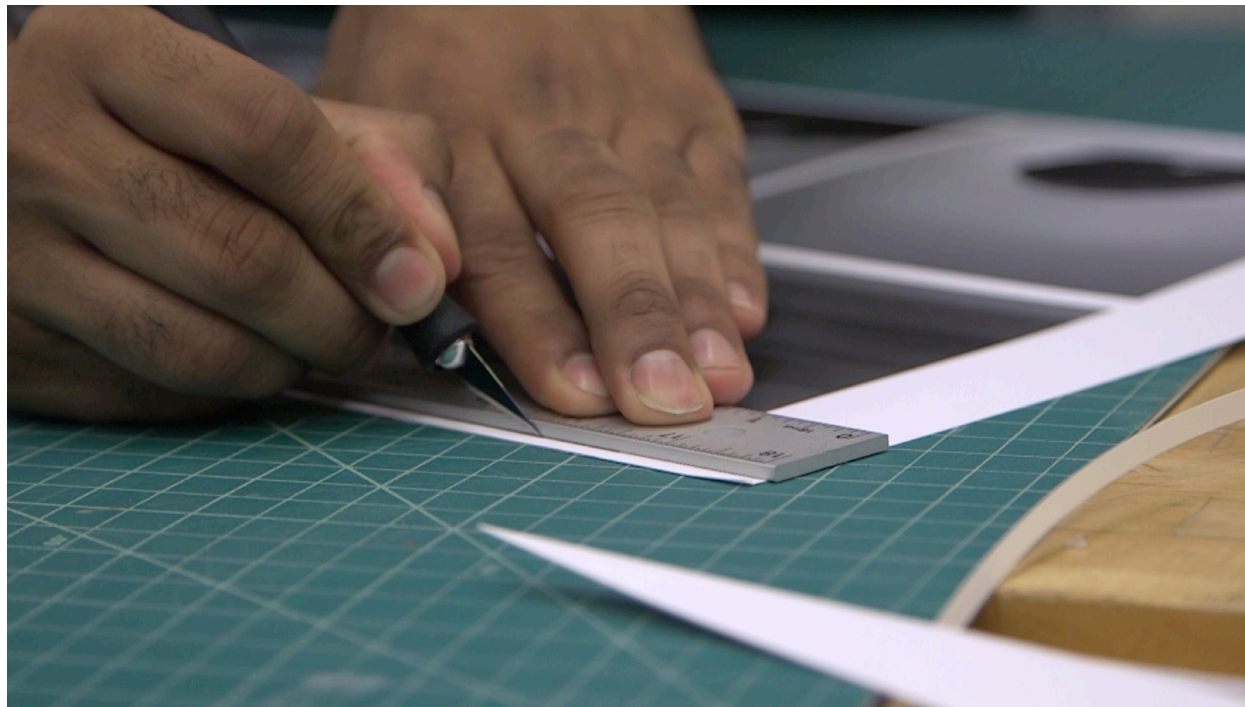
Fig 18. "Practice" Still

5 minutes 12 seconds

Fig 19. "Practice" Redacted Script

"He explained to me, you know, _____ _____two_____ _____ _ justice trainings to essentially fund you know, the base salaries of people _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ that has to be paid for and valued as equal to what our design practice is. And the methods are helpful for me to hear _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ paying for being an expert."
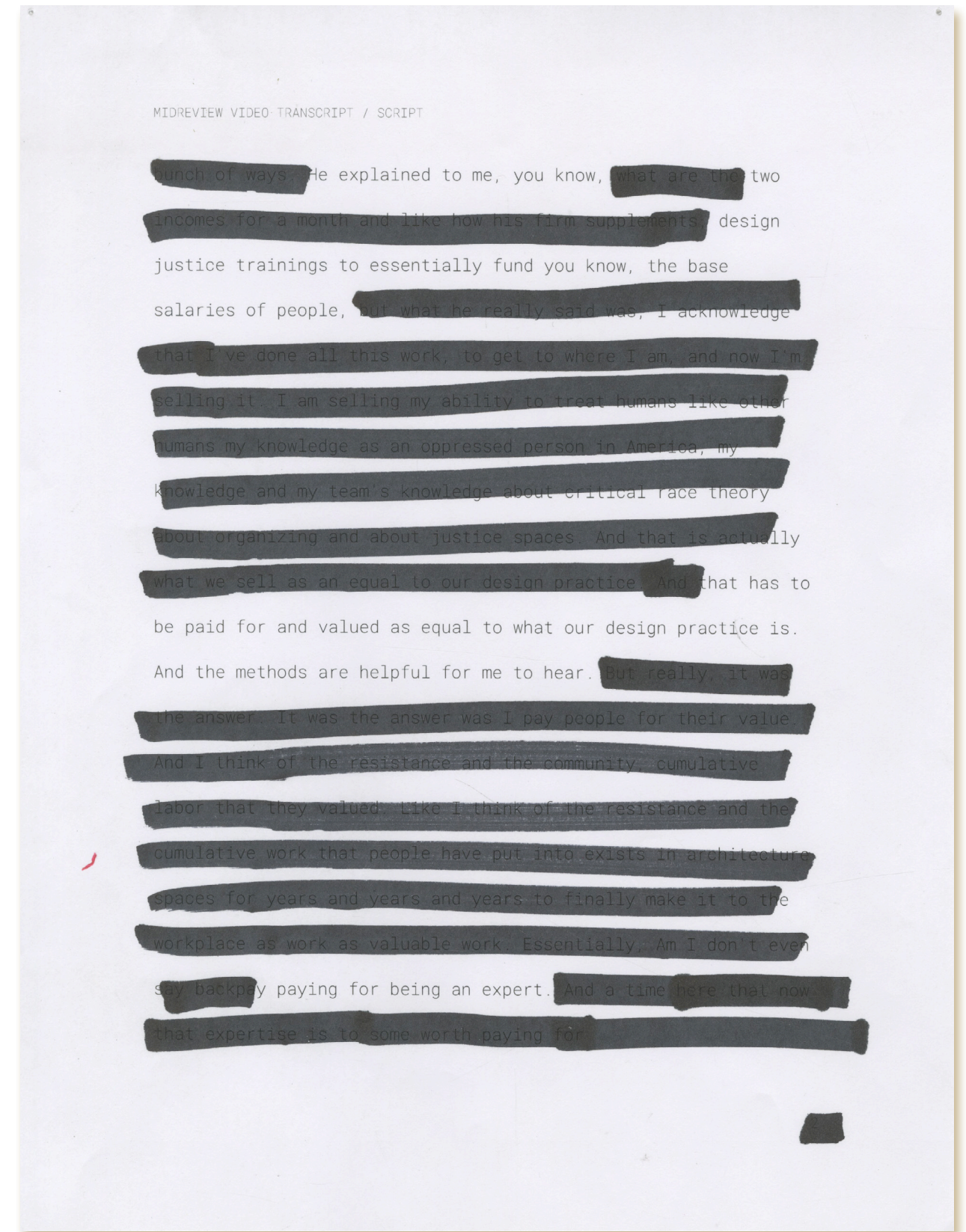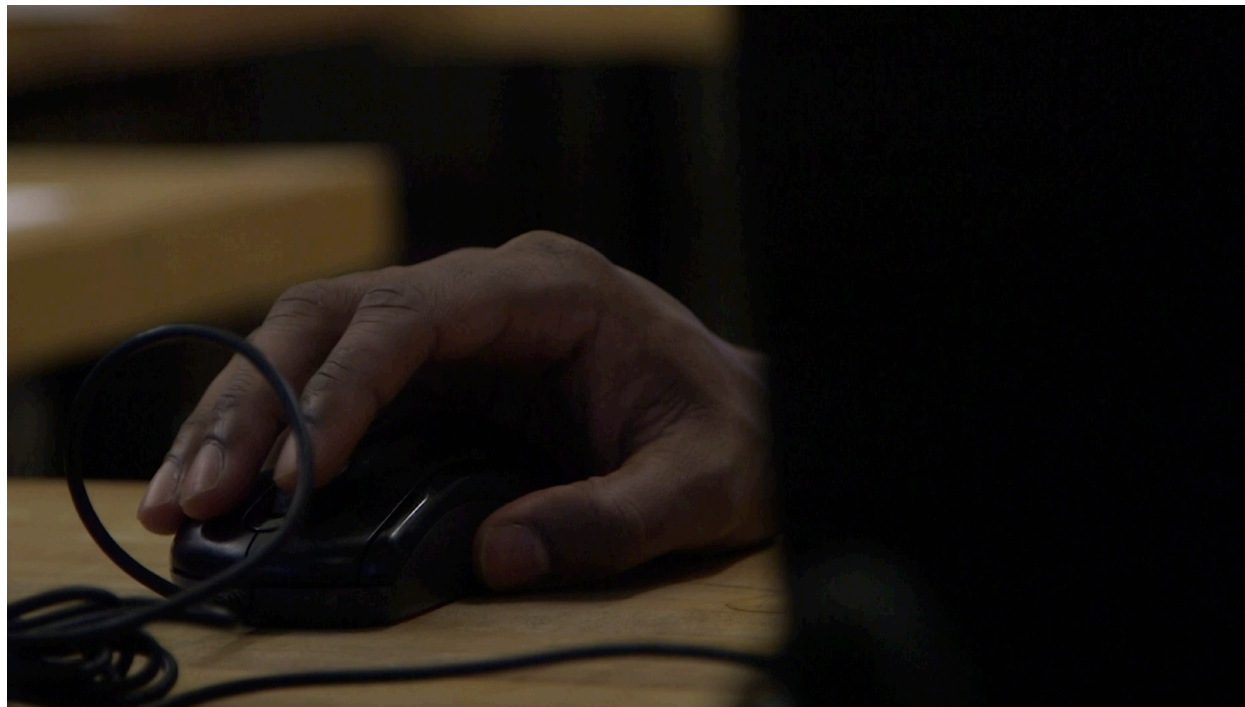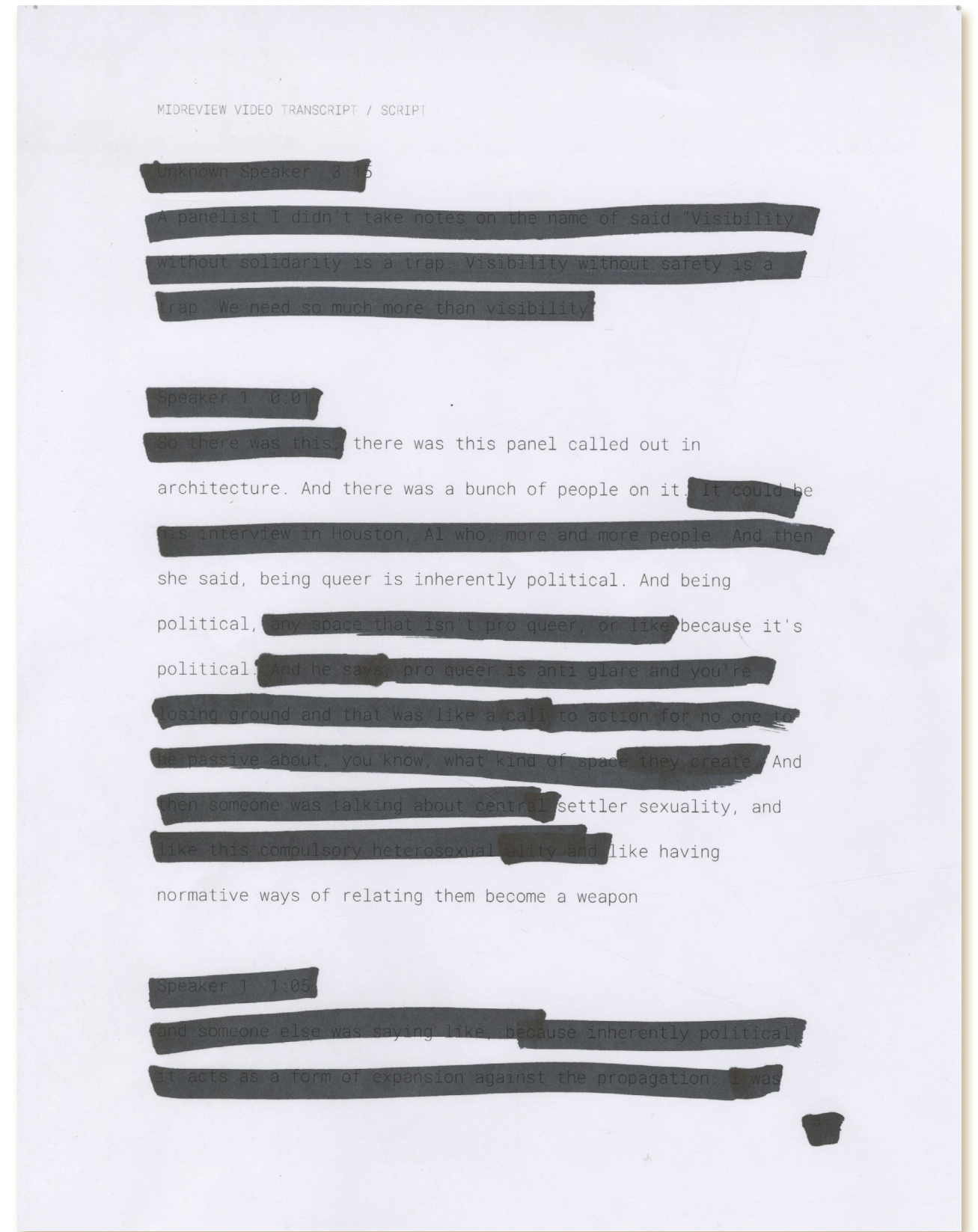
Fig 20. "Practice" Still

0 minutes 22 seconds

Fig 21. "Practice" Redacted Script

"there was this panel called out in architecture. And there was a bunch of people on it. _____ _____ _____ she said, being queer is inherently political. And being political, _____because it's political. _____ _____ _____ ____ And _____ _____ settler sexuality, and_____ _____ like having normative ways of relating them become a weapon"

MIDREVIEW VIDEO TRANSCRIPT / SCRIPT

she said, being queer is inherently political. And being

political,

normative ways of relating them become a weapon

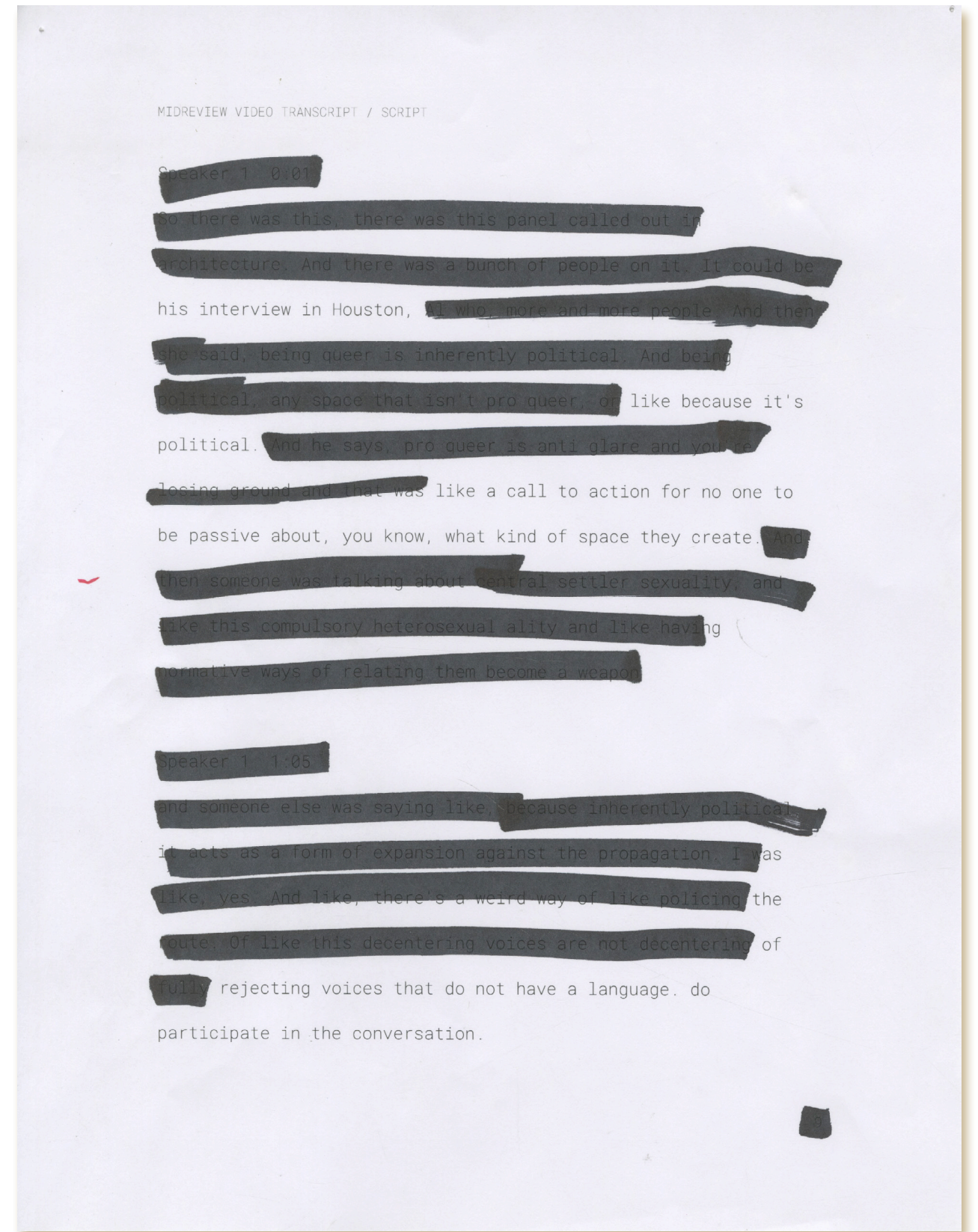Fig 22. "Practice" Still

1 minute 05 seconds

Fig 23. "Practice" Redacted Script

"his interview in Houston _____
_____
_____ like because it's political. _____
_____
like a call to action for no one to be passive
about, you know, what kind of space they
create. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____ as _____
the _____of _____
_____
_____ rejecting voices that do
not have a language. do participate in the
conversation."

WHAT ARE PRACTITIONERS ALSO GRAPPLING WITH? WHAT IS THE LINE BETWEEN PROVIDING SPECIFICITY AS A ME- HOW CAN WE SHAPE A WORLD THAT DOES NOT DISTORT US? ANS TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS AND DIRECTING A CONVERSATION TOWARD MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE? WHAT DO SQUISHY PEOPLE NEED? WHO IS "THEM"? CAN MY AUDIENCE BE A FRIEND? *I NEED TO KEEP IMAGINING WHAT I WANT. IF WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ME ARE MY PEERS, IT DOES MATTER WHAT MY EFFORTS ARE GEARED TOWARD.* HOW HEAVILY ARE THE BALLS DROPPING? WHAT DO I WANT FOR MYSELF AND HOW DO I GET THAT? HOW DO I REMIND HOW DO I GENTLY ASK AN INTIMATE QUESTION TO A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE? MYSELF HOW TO BE? WHAT IS THIS A RECORD OF?

FACILITATE A CONVERSATION RELEVANT OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA
HOW CAN THIS SERVE MY FUTURE PRACTICE?

FACILITATE A SPACE FOR MUTUAL REFLECTION
WHAT IS OUR COLLECTIVE PRACTICE?

Fig 24. Project Phases

Facilitate a Conversation Relevant Outside of Academia

This phase of the process involves identifying what elements of the thesis project to an audience unfamiliar with the specificities of my experience.

How Can This Serve My Future Practice?

Since I was working toward engaging the audience at the final review, I needed to understand what media I could provide to prompt a curated conversation and still be respectful of upholding my values. Through a proposition from Oana, my first attempt at producing this media was to continue documenting process work to enable myself to center process rather than the architectural designs I would be working on throughout the semester. The medium was generous because it allowed me to relieve pressure from any collaborative processes I engaged with during the semester. However, as soon as I prioritized the video medium, the work strategy I picked up in spite of the pressure of the A.P.I.O.H., my attraction to the camera as a documentation strategy ceased. Rather than ruin my relationship with video production, I set out to discretize the subversive elements throughout my work thus far, strategizing to arrange them into a coherent collection. Rosalyne reminded me throughout the semester that "knowledge is a collection of information," and my job is to curate and arrange that information. The collected fragments became the fuel for the design of a facilitated discussion.

Fig 25. Phase 4 Physical Archive

Fig 26. Phase 4 Physical Archive

To attain my goal, I concluded my next stage would have to be a facilitated conversation. I was interested in what others think about the topics that interested me. Next, I needed to understand how much information about previous work I should provide to a new audience and what presumptions I could make about a group that would be productive toward a generative conversation. Specifically, how much personal vulnerability do I need to bring into a conversation to earn a participant's trust and interest in engaging with me in this discussion? Am I asking people to ideate, or am I using the prompts to bring them to a predetermined goal?

An example of the facilitation implications I was navigating is the following:

I could ask a practitioner to respond to this statement: "I believe that it is possible to get paid appropriately for our work." That statement assumes the practitioner believes they are not being paid appropriately for their work. Another version of that statement is, "We are inappropriately compensated for our expertise." That phrasing opens up a conversation about whether we are properly compensated for our expertise

and could spur a discussion on what the practitioner defines as expertise. Both sentences insert my personal bias that the practitioner is not properly compensated. A third, less leading, question would be, "How are we compensated for our expertise?" That prompt does not presume to define the participant's expertise or thoughts on appropriate compensation. While that question is more inclusive, it is quite possible the resulting conversation will not arrive at my position on compensation in architecture. Considering my perspective and reason for providing the prompt, in the third example, can I still be moved or enriched by that conversation? It would not be enriching to end where I am starting. I want to move past my position and learn from other people's positions, explicitly concerning my position.

In this section of the thesis process, I started grappling with how to use techniques as a facilitator to frame and temper power dynamics. I began to ask myself questions, like, which of these questions can my grandma answer? Building off facilitation techniques from the last section, I iterated a series of introductory speeches with varying levels of personal vulnerability and value

signaling. I used tactics like identifying the audience to build a group consciousness of who is in the room, clarifying how I related to the field on a personal level, defining my indicators for success, relating the thesis to the discipline, providing transparency about schedule and structure, presenting participation as

optional, providing specific instruction, and supplying prompt cards for attendees.

The following page shows materials from the final stage of the thesis that function as a second generation to the work from this phase.

THESIS PREP
A CRITICAL REFLECTION STARTER PACK

What if the ways I derive value in my work devalues my project in the normative discipline? Does that matter?

save yourself.

What do I limit myself to when I am bound by architecture's definition of rigor?

save yourself.

What is the criteria for failure?

save yourself.

If I make better work when I am full and present, what do I need to be full and present?

save yourself.

How much energy should I spend gaining validation?

save yourself.

If the pedagogy has not been serving me as I need it to, how have I been working to build infrastructure for myself?

save yourself.

What ways of thinking are privileged in architecture?

save yourself.

ALTERNATE MEANS
DAILY PRACTICES

Conduct ethnographic research about how architecture boyz clubs operate.

try it out

Begin the day with a conversation with yourself.

try it out

Pause every time the word "should" drives your decision making.

try it out

Dedicate an afternoon to investigate what gives you the energy to work.

try it out

Ask a question. Ask another question to answer.

try it out

Limit your conversations with the Architecture Police in Our Head to dedicated office hours.

try it out

Fig 28. Thesis Starter Pack

DO I NEED TO OFFER ANSWERS TO RECEIVE THEM? IF THERE WAS NO MENTAL BOX WHAT WOULD I DO? HOW CAN WE SHAPE A WORLD THAT DOES NOT DISTORT US? HOW DO I CONVINCE PEOPLE TO SUSPEND THEIR DISBELIEF AND ENGAGE WITH ME? IS MY AUDIENCE MY GRANDMA OR THE DISCIPLINE? *I WANT TO MOVE AND BE MOVED. I NEED TO KEEP IMAGINING WHAT I WANT.* AM I TEACHING A WAY TO INTERACT BY MODELING IT? HOW MUCH FURTHER DO I WANT TO MOVE? WHAT IS MY ROLE? *IT'S NOT EASY BECAUSE I AM PURSING THIS PROJECT WITH MY WHOLE BODY.* HOW DO I GENTLY ASK AN INTIMATE QUESTION TO A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE? WHAT DO I NEED HELP PUSHING BACK AGAINST?

FACILITATE A SPACE FOR MUTUAL REFLECTION
WHAT IS OUR COLLECTIVE PRACTICE?

Fig 29. Project Phases

Facilitate a Space For Mutual Reflection

What is our collective practice?

This phase of the process encompasses an act of translation as a means to engage an audience.

Despite the ethos that this thesis centers process over product, this part of the project necessitated creating engagement materials. However, these products were valued not for the materials themselves, but for how they contributed to my ability to curate a broader conversation. How can I build credibility in my earnest engagement with the audience through the materials? Can the materials allow participants to suspend their disbelief and set the tone by translating the concepts and ideas I have found most pertinent throughout the semester? The second act of translation in this phase was facilitation design. Which of my thoughts must I translate to engage a wider audience in a conversation? If I posit a successful conversation to be one in which I can move and be moved, how do I balance making clear my values and opening up my space and mind for differences?

Instead of a typical thesis review, the final format ended in a thesis reflection. The reflection included a walk-around gallery of 6 fabricated display boards enclosing a central seating area with four tables with chairs. The program consisted of an introductory speech, a 20-minute discussion section, and a 20-minute group reflection.

Fig 30. Phase 5 Physical Archive

A significant part of the thesis involved considering what I would like to create and values in my architectural practice and how those values can integrate into my academic career. I feel it is necessary to consider my practice and specify my values because they are often absent or present only at the surface level in my education at MIT. As a well-funded and influential institution, we should be preparing ethical designers who have spent years practicing and intentionally shaping their future careers. Despite the accreditation as a professional program, some classes that could prompt students to grapple with these questions are sorely lacking, such as our Professional Practice course. Numerous classes have the potential to teach students how to play out meaningful collaboration dynamics. However, most often, I hear testimonies of unrewarding group work scenarios with uneven load distribution or "all compromise" dynamics with little or no energy generation. Throughout my entire career here, I found it challenging to fulfill academic requirements while taking care of my body's needs. I have seen this dynamic echoed in my peers.

How could this type of educational support inform the kind of practitioner I want to be? Throughout my education at MIT, I have articulated abstractions like, "I have lost myself to this school." What I mean is that while pursuing my degree, earning fellowships, project research grants, and work assistantships, I have lost sight of my relationship with my body, community, and my original educational goals. In this thesis semester, I attempted to begin the reclamation process of my own identity as an architectural academic and practitioner. One of the final thesis presentation attendees, Sahil Mohan, left a poignant message on his reflection card. His lingering thoughts were a commentary on, "How much you must lose yourself to become yourself." I found the sentiment striking because I believe it takes tremendous effort to recover oneself after becoming lost. Without support, it is possible to stay lost for a long period of time.

A grounding step in this exercise to build a practice from my values is articulating my dreams and wishes for practice and pedagogy. Another was using the mini-book on practice to synthesize a collection of incomplete but intertwined statements and questions. Making the minibook becomes a reflective exercise when I embrace that I only have answers to some

of the questions, and I am interested in tweaking the statements to further reflect my growth and position. I am interested in these mini-books as a practice to continue revising and processing these concepts.
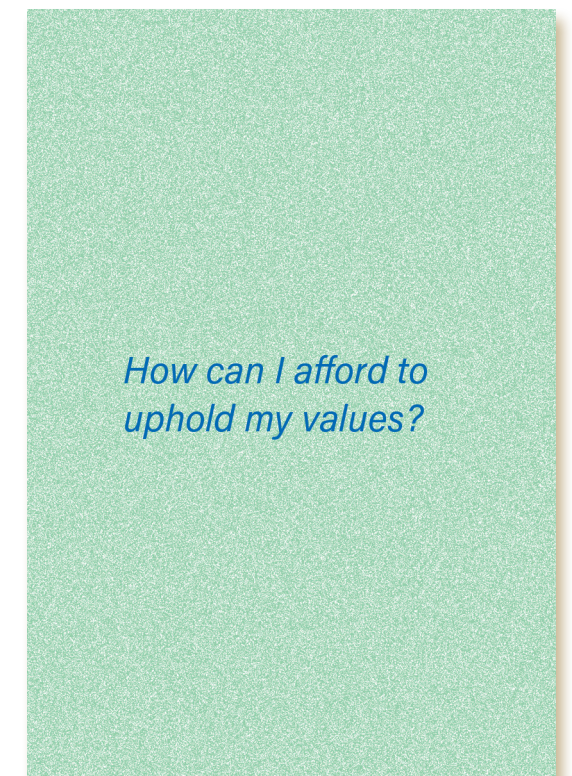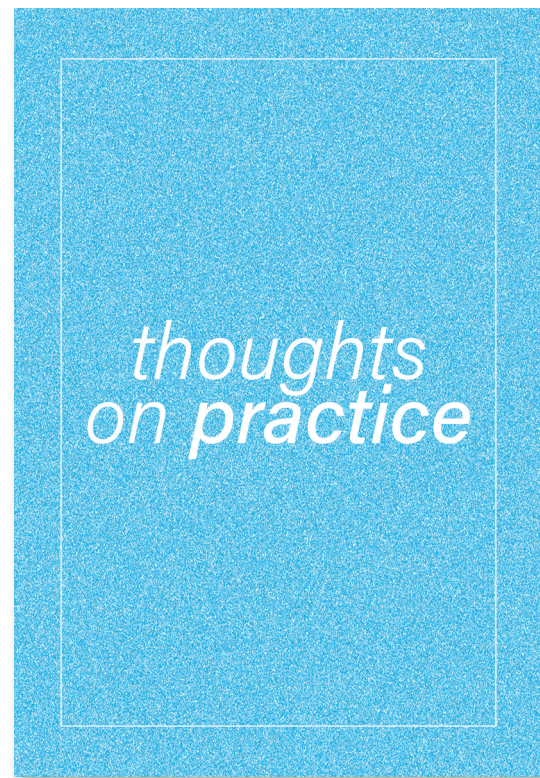
thoughts
on practice

A design practice
that reflects my
values

thoughts
on practice

Integrate payment
for design justice
work into
design fees.

Write into the
contract a clause to

Can I have a career I
am proud of?

What if we
introduced ourselves
with our politic?

Architecture
follows culture

How can I afford to
uphold my values?

Fig 32. Practice Mini-Book (Spread), Fig 33. Phase 5 Physical Archive (Right)

How do we pay ourselves for all the work?

Empowerment through funding structures

Organizing knowledge and design justice knowledge should be compensated equally with other technical skills in the architecture field.

Integrate payment for design justice work into design fees.

PRECEDENT COLLOQATE

When is it appropriate to withhold work?

Embrace financial compensation as a medium of value transfer

It's okay to need and want money.

The material consequences of capitalism effect my daily life.

Integrate payment for design justice work into design fees.

PRECEDENT COLLOQATE

Provide trainings for other firms to create an income stream based on accumulated knowledge.

PRECEDENT COLLOQATE

Write into the contract a clause to discontinue work if there is reasonable evidence for causing irreparable harm.

PRECEDENT COLLOQATE

Fig 34. Practice Mini-Book (Spread), Fig 35. Phase 5 Physical Archive (Right)

provides compensation
for all the kinds of
expertise that contribute
to the work

provides opportunities
for learning

is responsive,
not reactionary

centers my values

utilizes a funding
structure whose
dividends are
empowerment

is critical about the act
of translation

encourages balance

has infrastructure to
respond to individual and
collective emergencies

works toward
design justice

is collaborative

is thoughtful

is prepared to engage in
hard conversations

dedicates time
to self-reflection

acknowledges that
the current building
industry is material and
systemically complicit in
social and
environmental harm

welcomes the question
"what do we do instead?"

listens to the needs
of my body

dedicates space
to growth

doesn't ask people to
compartmentalize their
identity to engage
with design

insists on engagement

holds space for
the unknown

has infrastructure
to respond to
individual and
collective
emergencies

doesn't ask
people to
compartmentalize
their identity to
engage with
design

I value an educational pedagogy that...

Fig 37. Value Wheel

teaches how to make group work an act of co-authorship

interrupts the urgency narrative of academic production

teaches design justice

outlines how tools of architectural production have contributed to historical violence on a global scale and can be used for the enrichment of a collective imagination

posits diverse expertise as a value that is of collective benefit

makes room for emergencies and illness

prepares students to be ethical practitioners

responds to student advocacy teaches strategies for collaboration with construction workers, landscape architects, and community leaders

fosters creativity

holds community members accountable for bad behavior

doesn't privilege the patriarchy

acknowledges that learning is a cumulative process

doesn't normalize regular deprivation of physical and emotional needs

sometimes aims to pursue the unfinished

integrates group reflection into the collective practice makes space for change

does not perform the dominant narrative

leaves enough time to expand thinking for the sake of expansion and to share that learning with others

acknowledges there are many kinds of rigor

teaches strategies for collaboration with construction workers, landscape architects, and community leaders

acknowledges there are many kind of rigor

posits diverse expertise value that collective ben

In the project's many phases, there were several instances of co-authorship, collaboration, contribution, and collective influence. Initially, collective influence entered the project through the practice of maintaining a consistent presence and idea exchange with several peers. I found that absorption and consistently following a work, functions as a form of silent contribution. There are shared conversations that become meaningful and impactful when repeated, but a consistent presence is needed to have an informed opinion. Observing with permission and recording can be part of this cumulative effort.

A second attempt to integrate direct collaboration into the project was through the medium of the bathroom. My goal was to use the architectural form as an entry point into my peer's projects. What could I learn about them and their work if I designed a bathroom for their project? Though this aspect of the project did not reach fruition, I engaged several of my peers in an attempt to create this kind of collaboration.

There was also asking people to engage with me and my ideas explicitly. I frequently solicited input that I used

directly in my framework building. To collect and date every contributing action would have been crippling to the process of actually thinking, but the people who engaged with me are listed in my contributions. Another group of students generously gave me their time in a test run of my final review. Their comments and reflections on the process shaped my path. So did the many remarks of attendees of my mid-review, penultimate review, and my many thesis committee meetings.

Arguably the most time intensive collaboration in the project was shared with Katie Rotman. We designed and built six freestanding walls together with the help of Chris Dewart, Mackinley Wang-Xu, Asiha Cheema, and Harrison White. In addition to planning material acquisition, departmental transport, and logistics permission, we designed the walls to hold our presentation behind the other person's. At the break in the middle of the day during the thesis reviews, we flipped the boards around, revealing the other person's presentation walls. There was significance in the visibility of sharing. There is a weight to having the work of a collaborator as a boundary to the exhibition space. About 6-8 friends and family helped me set up the space
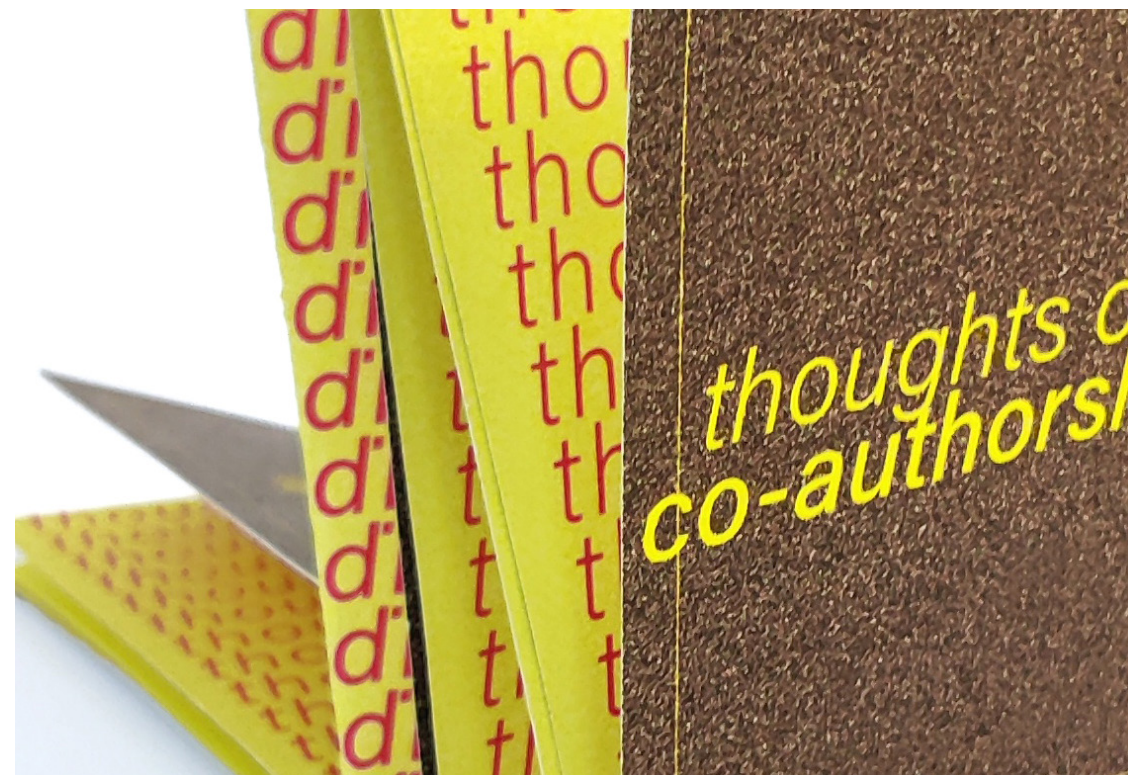
that day. In addition, the night before, for hours, two collaborators and I shifted tables around in the presentation space, reflecting on what the viewpoints allowed and if the power dynamics of the space led to one table or another. While I would call those who assisted in setting up the

day-of, contributors, I would call James Brice and Tejas Parekh, coauthors of the final presentation space. In a quiet but impactful way, Brenda, Hajar, Mingjia, and Dzidula all contributed their influence in their facilitation support on the day of the presentation.

thoughts on co-authorship

All built projects have some form of embedded co-authorship

Collaborators & Contributers

Rosalyne Shieh
Justin Brazier
Mariana Medrano
Oana Stanescu
Christopher Allen
Katie Rotman
Azania Umoja
Mackinley Wang-Xu
Sir Sahil Mohan
Sophie Weston Chien
Teumola Bayowa
Lauren Gideonse
Harris Chowdhary
Adriana Giorgis
Calvin Zhong
Bella Carriker
Thomas King
Mingfia Chen
Ozidula Kpodo
Charlie Janson
Mara Jovanovic
Hajar Ahrfai
Sheau Lim
Nasser Rabbat
Aisha Cheema
Harrison White
Hana Meihan Davis
Nia Rich
Junha Hwang
Sojung Lee

Tejas Parekh
Iris Zeng
Chris Dewart
Kim Nolterny
Jean Nolterny

Attendees who shared thoughts at my midreview.

Everyone who helped with the turn over today.

The friends and family who have supported me along the way.

Collaboration occurs between:

Client / Architect / Sub-Contractor

Draftsperson / Construction Worker

Principal / Project Manager / Intern

Existing Environment / Introduced Intervention

How is co-authorship composed in a field with many actors and few accredited authors? What is compromised?

When does it become crucial to define different kinds of contributions?

On each project page, list all contributors and collaborators without specified role.

PRECEDENT HESTER STREET

Fig 39. Co-Authorship Mini-Book (Spread), Fig 40. Phase 5 Physical Archive (Middle)

How do I attribute the collaboration that comes out of a conversation over dinner or during a trip to the bathroom?

*Is it ethical to categorize physical labor and expertise to "production" as opposed to "generation"?*

If someone passes on knowledge in the form of a precedent, are they a collaborator?

Is the precedent itself a collaborator?

The physical act of building is an imparting of knowledge.

All built projects have some form of embedded co-authorship

Collaboration occurs between:

Client / Architect / Sub-Contractor

Draftsperson / Construction Worker

Principal / Project Manager / Intern

Existing Environment / Introduced Intervention

The physical act of building is an imparting of knowledge.

How is co-authorship composed in a field with many actors and few accredited authors? What is compromised?

When does it become crucial to define different kinds of contributions?

Is it ethical to categorize physical labor and expertise to "production" as opposed to "generation"?

Fig 41. Co-Authorship Mini-Book (Left), Fig 42. Phase 5 Physical Archive (Right)
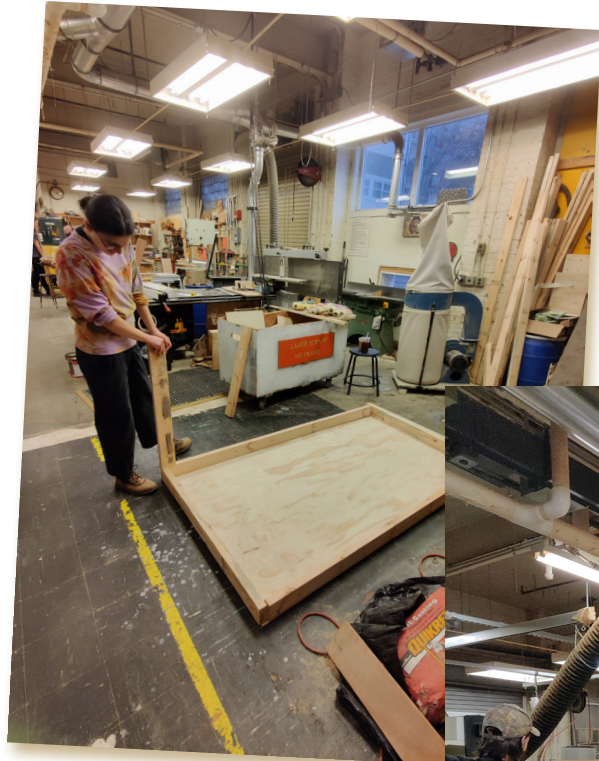
STATUS QUO TO LIBERATION

Design As Protest Collective

A MANUAL OF ANTI-RACIST ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION

Cruz Garcia & Nathalie Frankowski
WAI Architecture Think Tank

HOW TO: DO NO HARM

Amélie de Bonnières, Lev Bratishenko, Sophie Weston Chien, Marianna Janowicz, Swati Janu, Charlotte Malterre-Barthes, Mariana Meneguetti, Bailey Morgan Brown Mitchell, Lorand Mittay, Samarth Vachhrajani

HOW TO: DISTURB THE PUBLIC

Lev Bratishenko, Laura Serejo Genes, Meneesha Kellay, Liu He, Sebastian Elias Kurth, Stephen Kwok, Mariana Pestana, Esteban Salcedo, Agustin Schang, and Gabriela Aquije Zegarra

OPEN LETTERS
ISSUE #91 A GSD STUDENT TO ALL OF YOU
x

ELEMENTS OF WHITE MIDDLE CLASS DOMINANT CULTURE

Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones

Fig 43. Co-Authorship, Collaboration, Contribution, Collective Influence

Like many other semesters, this semester has offered sobering global events that have placed education and the weight of what it means to be a member of the architecture community into the center of conversation. The conversations have begged questions such as, What is the role of architects, and what are we responsible to speak up about? What is our collective and individual impact, and how do we find meaning in our work in times of crisis? What are our individual and collective politics? How can we shape communal and physical spaces to have the infrastructure to weather moral and physical crises? I have found the answers to these questions orbit around two central ideas: collective and individual meaning-making and responses and dispositions toward a dominant narrative.

As a collection of students and practitioners operating in the same field, as we collaborate together, we create for ourselves a culture, a culture of work, of practice, and of interrelation. I believe these cultures and subcultures are ecosystems we can activate to be products of our collective intentions and represent our collective meanings and values. Although we have values listed on our institutional websites, and we hold

expectations for each other in our shared social spaces, I question how many are intentionally carved out and how many are inherited. Who are we inheriting our culture from, and who do we want to give our cultural legacy to?

In the process of making this thesis, in addition to the larger architectural systems, meaning-making is applied at the scale of daily work. What is my daily work contributing to? How do I build intention into my practice to ensure what I do is always rooted in what is meaningful to me? Is there space in this content to locate and hold onto meaning?
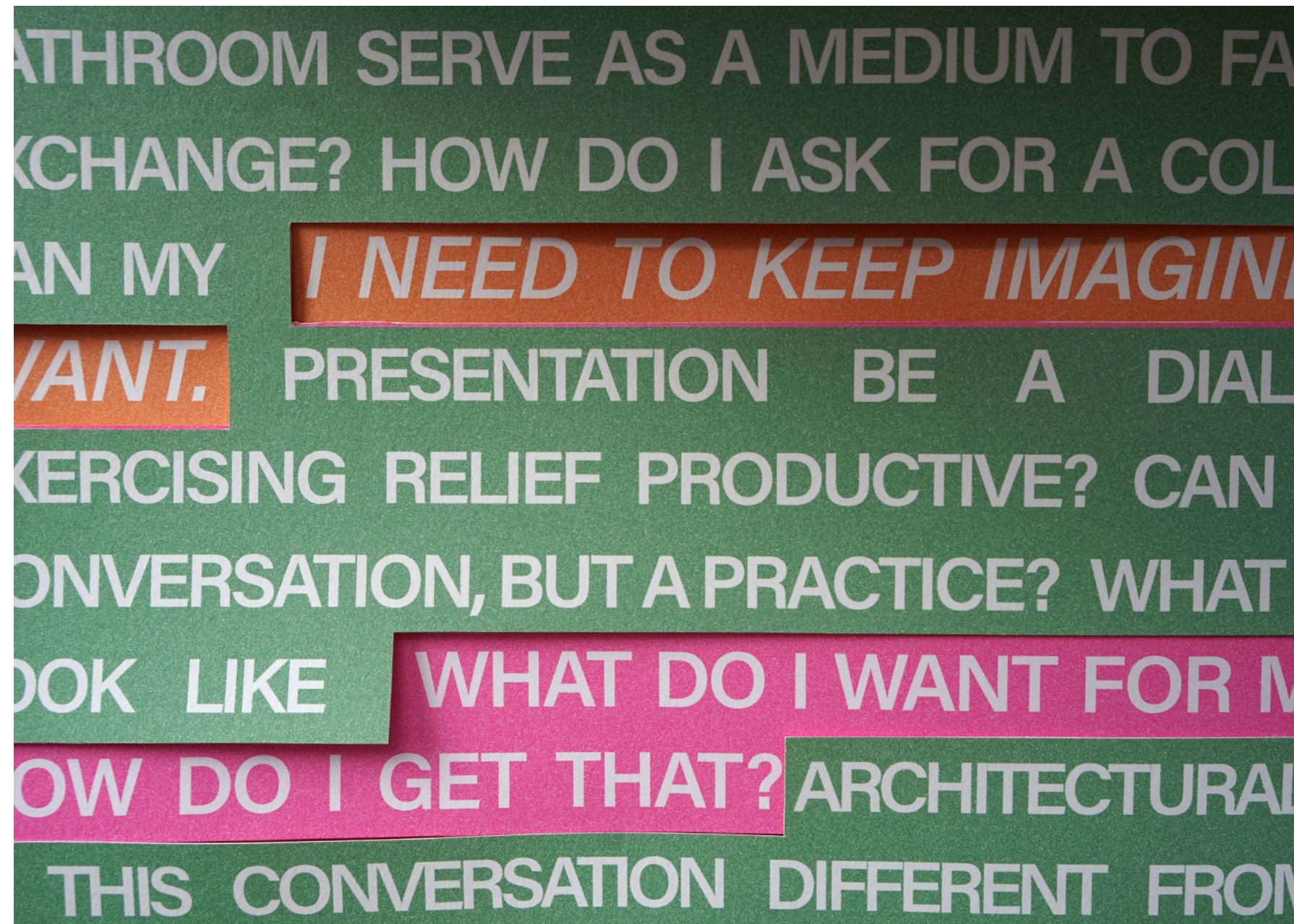
thoughts on *finding* meaning

The built environment will always be relevant.

Personal grounding is necessary to situate meaning.

What does my voice sound like?

What happens when you get used to being subjugated?

What is architecture?

How is architecture complicit in the social contracts that oppress and liberate us?

How do I find meaning in my work in times of crisis?

What are we not talking about in spaces like this?

Fig 45. Making Meaning Mini-Book

The narrative of false urgency is made apparent when confronted with true urgency.

Determining what has meaning is both a collective and personal journey.

If the institution isn't able to direct me toward meaning, What other models can I use to build meaning into my work?

What parts of me are not here?

Collaborate with your own way of thinking.

How is architecture connected to "what I think I should be doing instead?"

Does the work we do in school matter? Should it matter?

Learning is serious.

though on find meani

Embed joy in your work.

Fig 46. Making Meaning Mini-Book (Spread), Fig 47. Phase 5 Physical Archive (Right)

Fig 48. Phase 5 Physical Archive

The final reflection was both an experiment and an exhibition. I employed many strategies to build credibility for asking participants to be open to such a significant variation from the typical event format. The balance I was hoping to strike was between discarding established expectations and respect for both my and the attendee's time,energy and participation with the goal of genuine engagement. Outlined below are the facilitation strategies and excerpts of their uses in the speech I provided at the presentation.

Facilitation strategies.

1. Identify who was in the room. Unpack motives and attendees.

"Hello. I am Amanda, thank you for coming today. It's funny, although we are in this large crowd, few of you are strangers. Some of you are my peers who came because you were curious about my work or wanted to lend your support. Some of you are family and friends who are here because you were asked to be. Some of you are architects and practitioners who entered the day with the expectation that you will be asked to provide a critique. Some of you are tired at the end of the

day staffing a difficult event. Some of you just presented your thesis and are experiencing a startling range of emotions. Thank you all for coming. "
To support the room reset at this scale, I provided a name card with an additional question for a motive for attending.

2. An introduction of expectations. An invitation to join.

"The format of this thesis is going to be different from the other presentations you experienced today. I want to take advantage of this last chance I have to discuss with you before I leave my role as a student who is privileged with your time and attention. I encourage you to pursue this exhibition around you in your own time because I am interested in taking this next 50 minutes to design connections and start to build an infrastructure for collective memory. I am asking you to join me in a thesis reflection instead of a thesis review. "

3. Multiple exposures to the prompt. (First exposure.)

"I will start this thesis reflection by asking some grounding questions: Where have you been? (PAUSE) Where are you now?

(PAUSE) And where are you going? (PAUSE)"

4. A motive that contextualizes today's ask in a larger body of work.

"I ask you the questions because I think there is radicality inside of them. As designers we are often asked to ideate or brainstorm, but are not asked to reflect. I search for radicality in my practice

Fig 49. Photography By Chenyue "xdd44" Dai, Lightly Edited By Author

because I am terribly dissatisfied with the status quo. As an ethos for this thesis, I have spent each week of this semester reflecting on the process. This project has been an active self reflexive journey where the answer to these questions always change. I have found this constant self-question exhausting, but quite valuable. And from it, I have been learning how to center the things that matter to me for the first time in a while.

My thesis title is Not Allowed: Practicing Process - because that is what my thesis has been. I have been practicing a process in which I privilege self-discovery, curiosity, and uncomfortable ambiguity in lieu of the product focused work I have been tasked with in the majority of my architectural education. The project allowed for topic change, dramatic restructuring, and lapses in rigor. It found value in opening multiple paths and diverged from linearity, though it accepts that the effort expended has been cumulative. "

5. Introduction of secondary prompts.

"Some guiding questions I have identified on this thesis journey are: What ways of thinking are privileged in architecture? What modes of production are validated?

What do I limit myself to when I am bound by architecture's definition of rigor? How much energy should I spend gaining validation? What is the criteria for failure? What if the ways I derive value in my work devalues my project in the normative discipline? Does that matter? If we make better work when we are full and present, what do we need to be full and present? If the social contracts we hold outside of the architecture space are constantly violated, what new social contracts should we build? How can we protect them? If the pedagogy has not been serving me as I need it to, how have I been working to build infrastructure for myself? How can I continue to do so moving forward?"

These questions are also presented on the walls and on individual cards on the table.

6. Introduction of my urgency and expectation of what I hope to accomplish today.

"To me these questions are urgent because I am unsatisfied with the status quo. That's why I am inviting you to join me in this reflection as a room full of individuals, peers in many ways, and members of the design community. The practice we are taking part in today is

an experiment of a dinner party where the food that nourishes us is eachothers insights. I believe changes comes from within ourselves, and becomes tangible when we start to interact with others. Though I am not presuming to change the discipline with a thesis, nor aiming for you all to come to predetermined conclusions, I do believe there is radicality in trying something different. There is radicality in doing something simple together. "

7. Reintroduction of prompt, instructions, and reassurance that showing up as yourself is okay.

"In a few minutes the tables you are sitting at will become discussion groups based on the three questions "Where have you been? Where are you now? Or where are you going?". I chose these questions because I think they are necessary to consider before grappling with any of the other questions I have focused on in my thesis process. There is no correct answer. They allow us to meet each other where we are at, Wherever that is.
Some of you have never been to an architecture thesis review before and have absolutely no idea what's going on - and that is totally fine. For everyone doing this

Fig 50. Photography By Chenyue "xdd44" Dai

exercise, you will likely be uncomfortable until you are comfortable. Remember Silence is okay. Only speak if you want to. I am providing a starting point with the expectation that the conversation will take unexpected turns.
With that said, Please move toward a table with the question you would like to focus on - The groups will spend 20 minutes discussing at the table. We will then return to the group and talk about our thoughts. Reviewers please split up! If you would like to talk in a standing group or interact with the exhibition that is fine too!"

8. Post break-away reset of group expectation.

"In the setting of architectural critique I have found myself and witnessed others performing a character, a flattened version of the whole selves we return to when we leave the room. I don't believe the character of the critic or the character of the architecture student are enriching or productive for us in this context. This section of the thesis reflection is the most reminiscent of a typical critique, and it's despite that format that I would like to regard you all and for you to regard one another as humans before practitioners. I believe we can flatten the hierarchy of

expectations while honoring the work manifested by our expertise. Today I want to practice by example and I am asking you to practice with me.
Instead of buckling up, I am encouraging a collective exhale. An exhale of our ideas, our memories, or expertise, our perspectives. I hope that everyone leaves this critique, having learned something, having a curiosity about something, having gained a different perspective, having questioned what we feel necessitated to do in the discipline of architecture, having processed your thoughts, having practiced listening, having experienced an opportunity to center your lived experience unique perspective and situate it within the discipline, or simply having rested. To me these are all essential experiences that should be integrated into the discipline. "

9. Direct ask to the audience.

"To start the discussion, I would like to invite the first word to go to someone who did not come to the room today with the expectation of providing a critique.
What did you all talk about? How was the experience? Did anything interesting come up at your table?"

10. Post discussion request for participation.

"Thank you so much for participating today. I really appreciate your willingness to join me in this exercise. If you can spare five minutes, please write a reflection on the back of your nametag. Take a picture of them if you want for your own records, and leave them on the table as you move on to the reception portion so I can get a sense of the collective moment we shared, especially from those who did not share with the larger group."

Supplementary facilitation

I had asked three students to work as covert, planted back-up facilitators to support the conversation at the tables I was not managing. The plants, Hajar, Mingia, and Dzidula, also attended my test final presentation. I asked them to act as incognito guides in the conversation by speaking first and setting the tone. I explained how I would like them to negotiate silence and how to respond to the conversation moving away from the

Fig 51-52. Photography By Chenyue "xdd44" Dai

assigned topic. Brenda supported the event by managing timing and giving the large group cues.

Supplementary materials

The supplementary materials scattered around the room were meant to serve as tone-setting or takeaway materials. The supplementary materials included the six exhibition boards showing pedagogical and practice values, a compilation of discrete questions central to the project, process questions for each phase of the project, mini books, A.P.I.O.H. books, the paste-up of process work, printed copies of references to share, the exhibition poster, the fruit (snack), name cards, water, cups, chairs, and tables.

Overall, the facilitation and supplementary materials produced the desired effect. The conversation group I entered immediately started a conversation about hope and the future of design, how much of our feelings of agency are personal responsibility, and how much they are not. In the group space, the conversation was slower but still functioned as a place of learning for both the audience and me.

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 53. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"Everything was a performance this day.
But this is the only on[e] everybody took
the mask off."

Yiqing

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 54. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"I feel like architecture is slipping through
our hands in real time and maybe it's
okay."

Aisha

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 55. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"There is a tiny gap, barely measurable
[between] where we've been and where
we're going. The now slips forward and
back [between] parentheses and its
exactly this, a moment to sit together that
lets the now feel a little thicker."

Lina

Fig 56. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"I very much appreciate the space for that kind of poetic projection you made by clearing apart the structures of our expectations/anticipation in the thesis room. It was... hopeful and very much on an emotional pressure point so many of us feel but infrequently access"

Harrison

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 57. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"We are always told thesis is a way to open a conversation - you accomplished it, As every good work, it opens more questions than anything else."

Roi

Participant Reflection Excerpts

"Specialization is a terrifying and boring chore."

Rob

Fig 58. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 59. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"[D]id we always plan our now?"

Daniela M. and Kat

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 60. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"I came here with a clear opinion of what architecture is. Your thesis destabilizes it but I'm all in!"

Haidar

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 61. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"I am grateful for this reminder - I am more than the confines of my discipline"

Emmie

Participant Reflection Excerpts

Fig 62. Photography by Mackinley Wang-Xu, Lightly Edited by Author

"You did a great job of being inclusive, you did not come from a place of 'knowing' but from a place of unknowing 'teachable.'
Love, gma"

Jean

Thank you for reading.

Fig 63. Work Station

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x. "Issue #91 a GSD Student to All of You." Open Letters, openletters-online.com/Issue-91-A-GSD-Student-to-All-of-You. Accessed Nov. 2023.

List of Figures

Fig 64. Exhibition Labels

take + keep

flip through
gently please

spin!

watch

read + return

MY NAME IS **LINDSAY**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because be terrified of what I'm expected to do in 3 years

MY NAME IS **CHELSEA**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because I want to support you

MY NAME IS **Jacqueline**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here ~~because~~ TO CELEBRATE THE WORK

MY NAME IS **JAMES (he/him)**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because I'm a big fan of Amanda!

MY NAME IS **BELLA :)**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because i like strawberries & sitting

MY NAME IS **JEAN**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because AMANDA IS MY BRILLIANT GRANDDAUGHTER

MY NAME IS **CHRISTOPHER ALLEN**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because

MY NAME IS **So Jung**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because

MY NAME IS **Sahil**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because am friend

MY NAME IS **Mingjia Chen**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because It's my friend's thesis !!

MY NAME IS **NIA**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because I think Amanda is wonderful

MY NAME IS **ZACHARY**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because

MY NAME IS **Emmie**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because I want to celebrate Amanda

MY NAME IS **CHRIS A.**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because

MY NAME IS **ISHIR**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because Emmie invited me

MY NAME IS **Hyunseok**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because I want to learn

MY NAME IS **Rob (he/him)**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because Amanda is an icon

MY NAME IS **cassandre**
Please share your lingering thoughts:
I am here because i love you :)

Page 118 (left):

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS **Alaa Hamid**
I am here because Joy and Grief. And of course because I enjoy Amanda's work

So happy to be invited. So proud of you. Amazing Thesis!! Congratulations!

MY NAME IS **PETRA**
I am here because

MY NAME IS **SLIM SHADY**
I am here because OF THE JOY OF PARTICIPATING

MY NAME IS **KIM**
I am here because AMANDA IS MY AMAZING DAUGHTER

MY NAME IS **MARCELO**
I am here because GUEST CRITIC

MY NAME IS **Harrison**
I am here because Amanda Rules

projection of what is to come for you, and I very much appreciate the space for that kind of poetic projection you made by clearing apart the structure of our expectation/anticipation in the thesis room. It was cool. and hopeful and very much on the emotional pressure point so many of us...

MY NAME IS **ROI**
I am here because I was invited to, but it's also my pleasure

Page 119 (right):

Congratulations for the (clear?) courageous work. We are always told a thesis is a way to open a conversation — you certainly accomplished it.
As every good note, it opens more questions than anything else.

MY NAME IS **Hajar**
I am here because Amanda :)

MY NAME IS **Daniela M. & Kat**
I am here because curious

MY NAME IS **AISHA**
I am here because (AND ADDRESSING PRECARITY OF ...) SITTING IN ON A SICK ASS REVIEW B) FLIP →

MY NOTE IS ILLEGIBLE BUT THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR MAKING THESE SPACES FOR US; OF DISCUSSION, OF CARE, AND OF REFLECTION. YOU WILL BE SORELY MISSED!!! ♡♡♡ HOPE TO STAY IN TOUCH WHEREVER YOU "GO". — AISHA ♥ 12/21

MY NAME IS **haidar**
I am here because

MY NAME IS **Kanyu Liu**
I am here because

Be able to say no.
to leave
to go easy
to go to bed
to not do architecture
to rest
:)
"easy it is"

MY NAME IS **JUNHA**
I am here because I CARE

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS Courage Dzidula Kpodo

I am here because

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS SARAH

I am here because
Friendship
Discourse Learning

CONGRATS
2
AMANDA

OUT OF PLACE?
↳(ME)

DIM LIGHTING
ALWAYS KEY

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS EMILY.

I am here because
I wanna learn!

Please share your lingering thoughts:
So proud!!!

MY NAME IS Neha

I am here because
to support my childhood
friend!

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS Rosalyne Shieh

I am here because
I'm Amanda's thesis
advisor

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS JUNIE ALLEN

I am here because

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS Yiqing

I am here because
I am a thesis M.Arch :)
Supporting Amanda

Please share your lingering thoughts:
You teach us all
a lot every day

MY NAME IS TEJAS PAREKH

I am here because
TO SEE AMANDA'S
THESIS!

Please share your lingering thoughts:

MY NAME IS LINA BONDARENKO

I am here because
of dissatisfaction with
the status Quo

there is only a
tiny gap, barely
measurable btwn
where we've been &
where we're going.
The now slips forward
& back btwn parentheses
and it's exactly this,
a moment to sit together,
that lets the now feel
a little thicker.
Thank you AMANDA!
We will try to do this more!