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THE AFTERLIVES OF SOCIAL DEATH:
LEGAL VIOLENCE AND TRANS RESISTANCE

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This talk serves as an extended meditation on the connections between the law and visual culture as a rethinking of resistance in the wake of epistemic violence. Evidenced by the 2008 closed-circuit videotaped beating of Duanna Johnson, a Black trans woman, by Memphis police officer Bridges McRae, the brutality of gender normativity and antiblackness disappear precisely at the moment of their appearance. By reading both the tape itself and the subsequent trial I suggest that trans embodiment is structured through a highly surveilled gaze that prohibits recognition. I then turn toward the sonic of trans rage—the sound of remembrance—as one way to mark time for those that fall outside of history.