This lecture will explore anonymity in the work of Alfred Schutz and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, looking at the role anonymity plays in several areas of phenomenological inquiry: otherness, common sense, and the social world. The concept of anonymity offers a helpful way to mediate between phenomenology understood as a transcendental project or an "eidetic science" in Husserl's words and phenomenology as the study of the perspectival situatedness of, and local practices in, the social world. Recent feminist phenomenology has turned to anonymity in order to think about the function of gender, and I will suggest that anonymity understood in this sense can help elucidate the events surrounding the murder of L. King, a gender-variant 15-year-old student shot and killed by a classmate in an Oxnard, California Junior high school in 2008.

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