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**Legible Bodies in Music Education:
Becoming-Matter**

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Legible Bodies in Music Education:
Becoming-Matter [1, 2]

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> **[Sound Clip 1]** A theory in the flesh means one where the physical realities of our lives—our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings—all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity. Here, we attempt to bridge the contradictions of our experience:
>> We are the colored in a white feminist movement.
>> We are the feminists among the people of our culture.
>> We are often the lesbians among the straight.
>> We do this bridging by naming our selves and by telling our stories
>>> in our own words.
>
>> Cheríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (1983, 23)

If you look at me closely, you might notice that I wear one earring—pierced—in my left ear. Neither adornment nor caprice, it is an inverted black triangle, the symbol Nazis used during World War II to identify so-called anti-social people, including single mothers, prostitutes, feminists and lesbians. I began wearing the earring[3] while teaching at Boise State University, because students there consistently and insistently mistook the ring on my left hand as a heterosexual wedding band. Frustrated and disappointed, (also wary to speak the truth for which I literally could be fired without cause or recourse), I decided that the only option for maintaining my integrity was to present myself in drag—as heterosexual.[4] Theatrically, *drag* only works if the audience knows that the performer is in fact *not* who or what she or he presents.[5] For instance, men who present themselves as women to unknowing audiences are cross-dressing; they are literally female impersonators, unless, of course they are transgendered—and are not men. For these presentations to be drag, however, audiences must know that the women appearing before them are, in fact, not

> I know you are reading this poem listening for something, torn between bitterness and hope
> turning back once again to the task you cannot refuse.
>> Adrienne Rich (1991, 26)

women. To present myself in drag as heterosexual, then, I had to provide clues that I was actually homosexual. In **[Sound Clip 2]** addition to ditching the last of my dresses, buzz-

cutting my hair was certainly the most obvious clue—albeit the style was quite fashionable for a time among certain heterosexual women performers such as Sinead O'Connor. Wearing the earring was the more subtle—but for me defining—clue. Not only did it signal that I am *not* heterosexual, and further, that I *am* homosexual and lesbian specifically, it also articulated oppression, and by implication, its history of death and violence associated with normative heterosexuality which is to say heteronormativity, heterosexism, and racism.

Like society generally, music education is inhered with heteronormativity and whiteness, as well as normative assumptions about gender, economic class, culture, religion, bodily and cognitive ableness, to name a few social characteristics (what Judith Butler [1999] refers to as the "embarrassed 'etc.' at the end of the list" [p. 182])[6]—in addition to music styles, genres and musical talent related to music education curricula and pedagogical approaches. The norms that I refer to here are understood in terms of their "regulatory power" (Butler, 1993, 187) to constrain and produce unstable subject positions inhered with power, such as, musician, student, and teacher. Equity and social justice, then, are ongoing and **[Sound Clip 3]** salient concerns within the profession.

Although typically understood intuitively in terms of fairness, social justice eludes definition. Similarly, equity is not synonymous with equality (which in any event is an impossible state), but refers instead to difference in terms of positionalities and power (levelling the playing field, if you will). As the basis of identifying and opening spaces for political engagement in music education, I understand equity—and by implication social justice—in terms of oppression "as a political and subjective category that is arrived at from the specific standpoint of the oppressed, in their struggle, and as a form of consciousness" (de Lauretis, 1990, 140). Although each "modality of oppression . . . must have its own distinguishing features" (Grosz, 1995, 225) and consequently is experienced uniquely by each group, lesbians and gay

> A year before the Lesbian Avengers were founded [in 1992 by a group of lesbian activists from ACT-UP], Oregon skinheads killed a [black] lesbian
> **Hattie Mae Cohens**
> and [a disabled] gay man
> **Brian Mock**
> by throwing a Molotov Cocktail into their home. This was done in retaliation for their working against the passage of an amendment to Oregon's constitution that would have labeled [*sic*] homosexuality "perverse." When the Lesbian Avengers eat fire, they take that very element that was used against them and consume it in a symbolic act while non-fire eating Avengers chant, "The fire will not consume us—we take it and make it our own."
> Lesbian Avengers website, Philadelphia (names added)

men experience oppression in a way that other groups do not. Oppressed as a function of their behaviour, what they do, homosexuals experience oppression uniquely relative to other oppressed groups precisely because homosexuality is wilful, a choice that may be un-done at any time (Gould, 2005). To engage these openings of and for equity (at least) as social justice, I look beyond philosophical approaches related to pragmatism and critical theory, inasmuch as they have no discernible liberatory agenda in terms of specific oppressions in local contexts as they currently circulate in music education.[7] Instead, I explore discursive and materialist ways of thinking about possibilities of social justice (at least) as equity in

[Sound Clip 4] terms of Judith Butler's (1993; 1999) feminist and dynamically changing concept of performativity,[8] and Gilles Deleuze's (1987) concept of becoming.

Deslenguadas. Somos los del español deficiente. We are your linguistic nightmare, your linguistic aberration, your linguistic *mestizaje*, the subject of your *burla*. Because we speak with tongues of fire we are culturally crucified. Racially, culturally and linguistically *somos buérfanos*—we speak an orphan tongue.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1999)

Performativity

From a poststructuralist perspective, language is understood to create social reality and meaning, and hence, subjectivity through a myriad of discursive practices. Organizing knowledge and meaning through networks of power relations, discourses function as regimes of truth, regulating who, where, and how one may speak, as well as what may be spoken, normalizing some practices and beliefs while marginalizing others in systems of difference that both order and control the subject (Foucault, 1972). Further, this occurs through traditionally understood non-discursive practices, such as music, through which the body may be said to be constituted (Middleton, 1990; Shepherd and Wicke, 1997).[9] Consequently, the subject is unstable and multiple, as the discourses through which it is constituted intersect and compete. Because they are inhered with power, however, discourses are contested, rendering them vulnerable to co-option and change. Languages, including non-discursive modes of signification, then, are plural, and **[Sound Clip 6]** individuals are polyvocal in the sense that meanings shift according to specific historical and cultural usages. It is through language,

Mama, mama
Well, I know you know
But you couldn't survive
If I told you so
Meg Christian (2000/1972)

through intersubjectivity, that subject positions (temporarily) emerge, making the subject both subject to discourse and claimed through discourse.

_____

ABJECTION AND LEGIBILITY

[Sound Clip 5] He was very clear, my high school orchestra teacher, and almost casual about it. "Women don't compose music. Now if you want to teach I can recommend some good colleges for music teachers." Twenty-two years later, in my thirty-eighth year, I found Cohen's *Encyclopedia of Women Composers*. "You can have it for two hours," the librarian said. I protested. "Can't I take it with me?" "Two hours, and you can't remove it from this room." So I sat down with it, and for two hours I did not think about the class I was missing. For two hours I turned pages, and looked and read, **Kasia**, **Francesca Caccini**, **Ethel Smyth**. And cried and cried, and cried. Leaving the library, I ran to the office of my teacher: the only music instructor at a tiny junior college—a man who told me he had never taught composition, but was willing to try for me. In some anguish, I asked him, "Why didn't you tell me?" He looked stricken. "Because," he said quietly, "Because I didn't know."

Carol Matthews
music: "Snow Walker" by Carol Matthews, 2001

Subject positions are located in terms of abjection and legibility; indeed, subject positions are constituted in terms of what is excluded, what is repudiated (Butler, 1993). As "the radically excluded," (Kristeva, 1982, 2), the abject delineates the borders of legibility—what is of worth and value. Like all exclusions, abjection is necessarily political, and is caused by "what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" (p. 4). Consequently, it contributes to the instability of all subject positions and must be rejected, constructing the lives of abject [Sound Clip 7] subjects—"those who are not yet 'subjects'" (Butler, 1993, 3)—unworthy and without value, outside the domain of intelligibility. Further, this "domain of unlivability and unintelligibility" (p. 22) constitutes "the outside-of-meaning" (Kristeva, 1982, 22), in which abject bodies and lives do not

And I have known for a long time what an Indian is supposed to be is dead. . . . More than forgotten, more than oppressed, more than terminated, relocated, removed: the word for it is extinguished. Dead. . . .

I can imagine a world without Indians. It is a world that has surrounded me most of my life. I only just now recognized it—a world that will have records—pictures, foods, artifacts, heritages of Indians, all transformed into something unrecognizable to an Indian. But it won't matter, I guess. All of us who cannot live in such a world won't, and all of us will be good.

Paula Gunn Allen, (1998, 38)

register precisely because they are illegible, and hence, do not matter. Bodies and lives only become legible or come to matter—to materialize—through citation of—materialization of—the norms inscribed on the body through performativity (Butler, 1993).

As a discursive construction, performativity has been theorized extensively by Judith Butler (see, for instance, 1999; 1997a; 1997b; 1993) as that which enacts or produces what it names.[10] Butler (1993) argues that performativity involves a process of repetition: "a ritual reiterated under and through constraint" (p. 95), "a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer" (p. 234) in terms of social categories often associated with identity, most notably gender, sexuality and race.[11] Butler (1993) includes race specifically because "its 'addition' subverts the monolithic workings of the heterosexual imperative" (p. 18). She also is careful to note that misogyny, homophobia, and racism are not equivalent; nor do gender, sexuality and race exist as "separable axes of power" (p. 116). Rather, her interest is in how these and other categories (see Butler, 1999) function as "the conditions of articulation *for* each other" (p. 117, emphasis in original). While compulsory and constrained reiterations cite the norms inscribing the body, they are not expressions of a subject's will or choice; rather, they create the conditions for subjectivity. In other words, not only is reiteration involuntary, the subject does not precede performativity, but is instead one of its effects. This is a political process, in that establishing what matters, what is normative in terms of being occurs through both repetition and exclusion. Producing what counts as

[Sound Clip 8] subjectivity necessarily produces what does not, and "in the case of bodies, those exclusions haunt signification as its abject borders or as that which is strictly foreclosed: the unlivable, the nonnarrativizable, the traumatic" (Butler, 1993, 188).

Subjectivity is further realized discursively through Althusser's (1971) notion of

> My grandmother was a dedicated quiltmaker. That is the very first statement I want to make about Baba, mama's mother, pronounced with the long "a" sound. Then I want to tell her name, Sarah Hooks Oldham, daughter of Bell Blair Hooks. They were both quiltmakers. I call their names in resistance, to oppose the erasure of black women—that historical mark of racist and sexist oppression. . . .
>
> bell hooks (1990, 116)

interpellation which describes how authorities "hail" individuals into specific subject positions that are inhered with and in ideology. While we "constantly practice the rituals of ideological recognition" (p. 172), it is through the act of "hailing" or interpellation that ideology is inhered. For Althusser, this occurs through the force of authority, and he uses the

now well-known example of a police officer's hailing a man on the street, which interpellates the individual as a subject as an effect of what Lawrence Kramer (1995) describe as misrecognizing coercion for freedom. Responding to the officer's hail, the man stops and turns, thus taking up himself as the subject, because he both "recognized that hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was *really him* who was hailed' (and not someone else)" (p. 174, emphasis in original).[12] Recognition and concomitant identification are crucial to interpellation, because we cannot control the ways in which we are interpellated, and hence may be interpellated as abject subjects.

Possibilities of Agency

Subjectivities, however, are not stable or coherent, as they may be resisted, subverted, or exceeded. Both citationality and interpellation, then, open spaces for agency. Tracing her notion of performativity from John Austin's (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*, Butler (1995) argues that agency is "only legible *as the effect*" of discourse to produce or enact what it names (p. 134). Subjects, consequently, are temporally constructed, and neither entirely discursively determined nor completely free in their ability to use language. She elaborates:

> As a *mestiza* I have no country, my homeland cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. (As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races.) I am cultureless because, as a feminist, I challenge the collective cultural/religious male-derived beliefs of Indo-Hispanics and Anglos; yet I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet. *Soy un amasamiento*, I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joing that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings.
>
> Gloria Anzaldúa (1999)

> To be constituted by language is to be produced within a given network of power/discourse which is open to resignification, redeployment, subversive citation from within, and interruption and **[Sound Clip 9]** inadvertent convergences with other such networks. "Agency" is to be found precisely at such junctures where discourse is renewed. That an "I" is founded through reciting the anonymous linguistic site of the "I" . . . implies that citation is not performed by a subject, but is rather the invocation by which a subject comes into linguistic being. That this is a repeated process, an iterable procedure, is *precisely* the condition of agency within discourse. (p. 135, emphasis in original)

Because the subject must be reconstituted repeatedly, constraints on performativity clearly are not total. Our task, as Butler (1999) describes it relates to the quality of our repetition; repeating through a process of proliferation that goes beyond subversion of norms to their

displacement. This both articulates agency "in the possibilities of resignification opened up by discourse" (Butler, 1995, 135), and conceives performativity as resignification, "the force of citationality" (Butler, 1993, 220). While we cannot position ourselves outside of discourse, we can rework the norms and constraints that enable our subjectivity,[13] making agency an attribute—something that always already exists, "a contingent and fragile possibility" (Butler, 1995, 137). The question for what Butler (1993) describes as an "emancipatory model of agency" (p. 136), then, is how one responds, making possible an iterated catachresis.[14]

Similarly, Butler (1993) refutes Althusser's attribution of divine power to the law, and our automatic response to it, which constitutes the subject in terms of guilt before the law. Thus the subject is formed through the continuous "process of acquitting oneself of the accusation of guilt" (Butler, 1997b, 118). Whether or not the subject hears the hail or pays attention to it, however, interpellation has no more power than any other performative act. Subjects may be linguistically constructed without their knowledge, such as when it occurs **[Sound Clip 10]** without their hearing—literally or figuratively (Butler, 1997a). They even may be linguistically constructed without the use of an intepellative voice, as in bureaucratic forms, where interpellation occurs when the authoritative speaker is absent, rendering uncertain both its

> Language is also a place of struggle. . . . I remember the way we talked to one another, our words thickly accented black Southern speech. Language is also a place of struggle. We are wedded in language, have our being in words. Language is also a place of struggle. Dare I speak to oppressed and oppressor in the same voice? Dare I speak to you in a language that will move beyond the boundaries of domination—a language that will not bind you, fence you in, or hold you? Language is also a place of struggle. The oppressed struggle in language to recover ourselves, to reconcile, to reunite, to renew. Our words are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance. Language is also a place of struggle.
>
> bell hooks (1990, 146)

origin and destination. Requiring neither the subject's recognition nor identification through its power to only "introduce a reality rather than report on an existing one" (Butler, 1997a, 33), interpellation does not always succeed. Consequently, it may be resisted through misrecognition and disidentification. Given the resignification possibilities of language agency may be found in opposition and evasion, invoking the terms by which are interpellated "for another purpose" (Butler, 1997a, 38), as well as in what has is omitted, in how we are not named. Agency becomes possible by exceeding or confounding the requirements of the law, literally to be unlawful, to not comply. In other words, we must take

into account who or what is interpellated, who may be held responsible, and invoke the ethical imperative of "a willingness *not* to be—a critical desubjectivation—in order to expose the law as less powerful than it seems" (Butler, 1997b, 130).

Although Butler (1995) insists that she has not created a theory of the self, but rather a theory of gender (and sexuality and race), she has certainly written a theory of subject formation—at least in terms of gender, sexuality and race. I propose that this theory extends as well to subject formation in terms of musician-ness, claimed in and through performative acts related to music and music education, and make this assertion on the basis of our

[Sound Clip 11] intellectual, emotional, and corporeal engagements with music. Indeed, Wayne Bowman (2002) argues that it is on this very basis that humans value music. Because we participate in music within social relations, we come to it constituted in terms of (at least) gender, sexuality,

It's the how that baffles. A saxophone can complicate things.

You knew this, as do all musicians when the walk becomes a necessary dance to fuel the fool heart.

Joy Harjo (1994, 51)

and race, already legible or illegible in an ongoing process of re-signification. Does music have any role in this form of legitimation? In what ways can music (re)signify? Can we come to matter musically if we do not matter materially? What is our obligation, our responsibility? Does it matter—musically—if we do not matter materially? Does it matter—materially—if we do not matter musically? Does it matter educationally? Why teach music—if it does not?

Criticisms of Butler's theories[15] tend to highlight an apparent lack of concern and accounting for the lived experiences of materially constituted subjects. With her single focus on theory and discourse, she fails to advance a political agenda that is both relevant and realistic. Nor does Butler (1999) completely

disagree, arguing that political decisions are so contingent and contextual they "cannot be predicted at the level of theory" (p. 166). Like Foucault, she is willing to accept this criticism, believing that any specific strategies she could offer would only tend to foreclose other possibilities. Lois McNay (1999) acknowledges that Butler attempts in her book, *Excitable Speech*,

Woman Chief [of the Crow Indians] became a warrior on the occasion of a Blackfoot attack on her village. Taking up her gun, she killed several of the enemy. . . . Within a year, she was leading her own war parties. . . . Eventually, Woman Chief acquired four wives, which only increased her stature in the tribe.

Will Roscoe (1998, 79)

to bridge the **[Sound Clip 12]** symbolic/political gap using Austin's speech-act theory,

noting, "The idea of the instability of speech, which renders it open to reappropriation, replaces simplified notions of misidentification with a more complex model of positionality" (p. 179). She then criticizes Butler, however, for (among other things) providing an abstract and "negative account of agency as displacement . . . in a primarily individualistic notion of political practice" (p. 187) that does not take into account "the creative dimensions of action" (p. 189).

Butler (1993) argues that language is implicated by materiality even as the terms are not synonymous. Noting that processes of discursive signification are also necessarily material, she insists that conceiving of everything as only discursively constructed indeed fails to take into account material effects of "exclusion, erasure, violent foreclosure, abjection" (Butler, 1993, 8). So discourse cannot simply or only construct the subject, because it would still emanate from a pre-existing subject, one that constructed the discourse, hence personifying it. Further, construction is not an act, but rather a performative, the process by which subjects and acts come to exist. As an alternative to construction, Butler

> How could they not see us? We filled their plates and made their beds, washed their clothing and made them rich. We were not mindless, stupid, created for the tasks we were given. We were tired and angry and alive. How could they miss us? We were the horses they rode, we were the wheels of their family pride. We were the springs where they drank, and our lives went down their throats. Our touch was on every single thing they saw. Our voices were around them humming, whispering, singing, telling riddles, making life in the dust and mud. We have always been here, doing what had to be done, working eating, sleeping, singing, suffering, giving birth, dying. Dying of hunger and parasites, of cholera and tuberculosis. Dying of typhus and anemia and cirrhosis of the liver. Dying of heroin and crack and botched abortions, in childbirth and industrial accidents, and from not enough days off. This is our history. We met necessity every single day of our lives. Look wherever you like, it's our work you see.
>
> Aurora Levins Morales (1998, 36)

offers "the notion of matter, not as site or surface, but as *a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter*" (p. 9, emphasis in original). Bodies are constructed discursively over time; that is, they are not **[Sound Clip 13]** natural, although they clearly do exist materially. The material function of discourse, the material(ization) of discursivity, however, is legibility. Social justice, then, may be understood as rendering the abject legible.

Obviously rendering the abject legible must go beyond expanding the boundaries of

legibility—as, in this configuration, someone or something must necessarily remain illegible. Further, it is impossible to discursively or materially bring the abject inside because "what is produced as the 'constitutive outside' of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent" (Butler, 2000, p. 12). In terms of the logic of reversibility, then, someone, something must occupy spaces of abjection. Rendering the abject legible, then, would be to somehow legitimate abjection, to enable it without the foreclosure of repudiation—to de-abject abjection. What would it mean to find legibility in ambiguity, contradiction, polyvocality—abjection? This problematizes the very notions of abjection and legibility, both predicated on difference and differencing, requiring alternative ways of thinking abjection, alternative strategies that configure the abject not as becoming *to* matter, but as becoming-matter, which, describes Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987) concept of nomad; that is, conceiving abject nomadically.

Becoming-Matter

For Deleuze and Guattari, the nomad involves ways of occupying space that are characterized by connections and "revolutionary sidestepping" (Massumi, 1992, 106) around and through that which would limit nomadic mobility.[16] Deleuzian becoming moves us through and beyond that which would limit (abject) us. Not temporal in that it is "neither linear nor sequential" (Braidotti, 2002, 118) nor teleological in that it is

> Says a woman friend, who specializes in American song:
>
> I gave a talk on lesbian composers (the possibility, the prohibition) at a works-in-progress colloquium, and though no one usually attends these events, this time the whole department showed up in force. They came to quibble, to enforce standards. I could see standards in the smile of the lovely young straight woman, a scholarly star who teaches the Schoenberg seminar. She told me (in rarefied diction I dare not imitate) that music was independent of the body. In response I wanted to strip her naked and lick her body head to toe while humming Bessie Smith's "I've Been Mistreated and I Don't Like It."
>
> quoted by
> Wayne Koestenbaum (1994, 2-3)

not "regressing-progressing" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 239), becoming involves processes—flows and intensities—of deterritorialization (lines of flight) and reterritorialization, as it rejects the separation of subject and object on which abjection depends (Driscoll, 2000). Further, becoming refers to power and transformative potential that is external to the subject and relational in terms of rhizomatic interconnections without origin or end (Sotorin, 2005; **[Sound Clip 14]** Braidotti, 2003), existing only between, in the middle, where it accelerates or intensifies (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Politically, its

primary concern is resisting power that would prevent change, transformations, individuations.

The processes of becoming vary according to one's positionality as majoritarian or minoritarian. Because "majority is a model you have to conform to" (Deleuze, 1995, 173), it "assumes a state of power and domination" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 105) in which becoming is impossible. The task for majority (legible) subjects is to dismantle their "central position altogether" (Braidotti, 2003, 53) in an effort to become-minoritarian by deterritorializing their dominant subjectivities. For minority (illegible) subjects, the task may first include identity politics of resistance, "winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 276), as they go beyond the logic of reversibility and become-minoritarian in a political endeavour to destabilize and resist majoritarian power by experimenting, taking risks, creating. The intention for all becomings, then, is not to misrecognize or disidentify. Becoming does not "redefine, misapply, or strategically exaggerate a category" (Massumi, 1992, 88). It does not resist, displace, or establish alternative identities. Rather, its intention is to "destroy categorical gridding altogether" (p. 88), to de-subject, thinking not in terms of identity, but in terms of difference, which is to say, possibility. Becoming opens joyful spaces for problematizing the problematic, abjecting the abject, rejecting subject/abject dualisms, in which subjectivities are dynamic and productive, materializing temporarily over time not in terms of identities as subject or abject, but as potentialities.

Although I live in Canada now, I continue to wear the black inverted triangle earring. It reminds me and provides for others a re-call of those who died, **Felice Schragenheim**, and those who suffered, **Elisabeth (Lilly) Wust**, and those whose names we will never know. They have always sat in our classrooms, and continue to sit there today, as well as in every one of our music ensembles. Students and teachers illegibly constituted by whiteness **[Sound Clip 15]**

Says a semi-retired professional accompanist, a lesbian assumed by many to be closeted, though . . . with me she has been consistently unbuttoned and frank: . . . .

Screw the old boys. Ignore their condemnations, in advance. If you listen for the soon-to-come dismissal, you will never say a word.

Think instead of the queer students: silently queer, bruised and attentive, faithful to the full phrase, to the metronome and the composer's intention. To you, queer music students of 1948, this . . . is retrospectively dedicated.

quoted by
Wayne Koestenbaum (1994, 5)

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and heteronormativity that we fail to challenge. Students and teachers illegibly constituted by school music programmes that systematically exclude their musics and musical ways of becoming in the world. Students and teachers illegibly constituted by inadequate governmental financial support and mandated testing that limit pedagogical and curricular possibilities. We must experiment, play, dazzle, take risks, and be willing to fail, trusting ourselves as well as our students. Becoming-minoritarian, interconnected, we traverse musical and educational borders together.

As a Deleuzian feminist project (Braidotti, 2002) this process is materialist (embodied), concerned with power relations and current technologies, positivity, assemblages, connections as opposed to self-contained communities; conflating high/low culture, focusing on creativity and nomadic texts, nonlinear in terms of becoming as well as sexual difference.[17] It does not invoke questions of justice—of morality—however, but one of ethics (Deleuze, 1990).[18] Legibility is a necessary ethical response to and of abjection: "to become worthy of what happens to us" (Deleuze, 1990, 149), an ethical responsibility born(e) by everyone—legible and illegible—in processes of nomadic becomings. Through processes of becoming, the feminist subject, like all subject positions, must be achieved. It is a process that is never completed, but "liberates . . . a yearning for freedom, dignity, justice, lightness and joyfulness" (p. 61). While Deleuze would dispute the notion of yearning for justice, his politics also is one of passionate engagement, the yearning for intellectual work as "'the' **[Sound Clip 16]** central future location of resistance struggle, a meeting place where new and radical happenings can occur" (hooks, 1990, 31).

Becoming, created and creative, is always caused, and carries a revolutionary imperative, because every "democratic state [is] compromised to the very core by its part in generating human misery" (Deleuze, 1995, 173), and only hope is in becoming, transforming, change. Further, we are all implicated in misery: as participants enforcing it, as bystanders unable or not knowing how to end it, as survivors complicit to the extent of surviving it, and even as people involved in trivialities of western societies. Worse than all of this for Deleuze, however, is that

there is no
predictable or
reliable way to

I know you are reading this poem because there is nothing else left to read
There where you have landed, stripped as you are.

Adrienne Rich (1991, 26)

incite or sustain becomings "even within ourselves" (p. 173). Consequently, we must be active.

The icons of the states—democratic or otherwise—to which Deleuze refers are the "public statues of men on horseback and of men in battle" (Greene, 1995, 122): representatives of governments promulgating doctrines of pre-emptive strike as well as those promulgating genocide; military officers leading men to their deaths, men—and now women, as well—who are necessary sacrifices to modernity's heroic meta-narrative. In a world where rape is a practice of war, and ethnic cleansing its performative, Maxine Greene (1995) reiterates Freeman's (1994) contention that "'weeping women' have become the icons of our time" (p. 122). If she and Freeman are right, the depiction of this icon is not, as they suggest, Pablo Picasso's abstract images of weeping women, Cubist sketches of high modernism, but rather, Käthe Kollwitz's passional, material, unflinching images of women *weeping*—in which abject become-matter.

Lamentation: In Memory of Ernst Barlach
Käthe Kollwitz (1938)
http://www.dhm.de/museen/kollwitz/english/lamentation.htm

Woman with Dead Child
Käthe Kollwitz (1903)
http://www.artnet.com/artwork/184746/421/kathe-kollwitz-woman-with-dead-child.htm

Mother   loosen my tongue
or adorn me
with a lighter burden

Aido Hwedo is coming.

Aido Hwedo is coming.

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Audre Lorde (1986, 75)[19]

Dedicated to

music students and teachers[20]

queer
queered
queering

In Memoriam

Philip Brett
(1937-2002)

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Notes

[1] *Editor's note:* The version of this essay that appears here differs slightly from its originally published form, incorporating changes the author was unable to complete before the publication deadline.

[2] In this essay I explore ways in which music education may account for those individuals, musics, pedagogies and curricula that are silent or missing. I do so first by positioning myself as a lesbian in a profession where I am unintelligible. Through Butler's concept of performativity, I discuss how certain bodies (including musics, pedagogies, and curricula) are not intelligible as they are rendered abject and illegible. This happens through a performative process that must be constantly repeated, which signals openings for agency, or action for change. What must be avoided is replacing one illegible group with another, because legibility functions only in relationship to what is illegible. Thus it is not useful in music education to only include people, musics, pedagogies, and curricula that were excluded previously, because in doing so, someone or something else, of necessity, then must be excluded. Instead of working in this dualistic way, I argue that philosopher Gilles Deleuze's concept of becoming provides ways of approaching difference as Roberta Lamb (1994) suggests: "*as if differences matter*" (p. 63, emphasis in original). This is not 'difference from' but rather 'difference as;' difference as and in itself, compared against no standard of legibility. When we interact with each other, musics, pedagogies and curricula on their own terms in processes that are always incomplete and constantly becoming, multiple responses to problems related to difference become available. We are free to play together, take risks, fail, and try again, because no single response is ever finally right, just, or true. In this way music educators may address issues of social justice, concerns that deeply trouble us, and together engage in processes of creating in a profession that is both responsive and responsible to all who participate in it. Deleuze provides vocabulary for working with concepts that envision potentialities of music education's impossibilities.

This essay is a performance piece. It should be read aloud with the sound clips played at times separate from the reading and at other times overlapping the reading. Each reading literally is different not only in terms of performance but meaning as the reader chooses exactly when the recordings begin and end, and the extent to which they may or may not overlap the text. Perhaps the first music education theoretical paper conceived and presented as performance is Roberta Lamb's (1997a) now iconic piece, "Dorothy Troubles Musicland." Lamb developed related ideas in a presentation at the conference, Border Crossings: Future Directions in the Study of Music (Lamb, 1995) that were subsequently published (Lamb, 1997b). The layout of the readerly portion of my essay is reminiscent of Lamb's two-column essay known in the profession simply as "Aria" (1993-1994). Certainly my piece is indebted to Lamb's groundbreaking work.

[3] The inverted black triangle has been taken up by many lesbians to signal resistance to homophobia, heterosexism, and oppression. Wearing it as an earring is apparently common, as it functions performatively as simulacrum. This concept was theoretically developed by Suzanne Cusick in her presentation at the Border Crossings conference (Lamb, personal communication).

[4] See Sedgwick (1990) for a discussion of homosexual secrecy and coming out. See Ahmed (1999) for a discussion of passing and race.

[5] Judith Butler (1993) notes, "What is 'performed' in drag is, of course, *the sign* of gender, a sign that is not the same as the body that it figures, but that cannot be read without it" (p. 237, emphasis in original).

[6] Butler (1999) goes on, "Through this horizontal trajectory of adjectives, these positions strive to encompass a situated subject, but invariably fail to be complete. This failure, however, is instructive: what political impetus is to be derived from the exasperated 'etc.' . . .? This is a sign of exhaustion as well as of the illimitable process of signification itself. It is the *supplément*, the excess that necessarily accompanies any effort to posit identity once and for all. This illimitable *et cetera*, however, offers itself as a new departure for feminist political theorizing" (p. 182-183, emphasis in original).

[7] In the context of the recent inclusion of feminist and race theorists, distinct from pragmatist and critical theorists, in the MayDay Group's symposia and online journal, this observation is not asserted as a truth claim.

[8] It should be noted that in her theory of performativity, Butler uses her critical reworking of psychoanalytic theory to account for the psychic aspect of subject formation. Similarly, Braidotti (2002) argues that psychoanalytic theory is necessary to account for the unconscious. I remain deeply sceptical of any psychological theory based on clearly masculinist values, and adopt Grosz's (1995) stance. While she agrees with Butler that psychoanalysis provides *an* (emphasis mine) account of "psychical and fantasy life," Grosz recommends "a cultivated ambivalence . . . to extract what may be of use in psychoanalysis while using psychoanalytic concepts . . . to problematize psychoanalytic assumptions *and to move beyond them*" (p. 154, emphasis added).

[9] Further, in contradistinction to Middleton (1990), Shepherd and Wicke (1997) claim that as a function of signification, "'consciousness' can be articulated 'linguistically' *or* 'musically'" (p. 217, emphasis in original).

[10] For a detailed and immanently understandable account of the evolution of Judith Butler's theory of performativity, see Salih (2002). My purpose is not to comprehensively explicate her theory, but to theorize performativity specifically in terms of potentialities related to social justice. Focusing on legibility and abjection in relationship to the Deleuzian notion of becoming, I argue that performativity is imbued as feminist. My attempt is performative to the extent that it repeats and cites the work of Butler, while (necessarily) changing it (see Fortier, 1999).

[11] Her project involves tracing and following "the ways in which identification is implicated in what it excludes" (p. 229) in order to reveal how community may be conceived in the future, and argues that this should be done through "sequential readings that expose the partiality of each constitutive reading" (Butler, 1999, 168).

[12] Althusser (1971) notes, however, that because ideology pre-exists the subject, "ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing" (p. 175), noting that although everything takes place inside ideology, consciousness of it makes one seem to be outside of it. Because ideology always denies its ideological character, "the accusation of being in ideology only applies to others." Consequently, "what thus seems to take place outside ideology (to be precise, in the street), in reality takes place in ideology. What really takes place in ideology seems therefore to take place outside it" (p. 175).

[13] Jon McKenzie (1998) argues that Butler's subversiveness lies in what he calls "her theory of normative performance" (p. 219), by which she (deliberately–as "a tactic of

resignification") misused the term *performative* to simultaneously refer to "oppositional cultural practices and . . . normative practices and discourses" (p. 229).

[14] "[C]atachrestic acts of speech . . . fail to refer or refer in the wrong way" (Butler, 1993, 217).

[15] For a thorough review, see Salih (2002).

[16] Joughin (1995) succinctly defines becoming thus: "Rather than a transition between two states of being, a line of development defined by starting point and endpoint, becoming is a free play of lines or flows whose intersections define unstable points of transitory identity. . . . Fluid becoming is opposed to static being in various contexts . . . as 'revolutionary,' 'artistic,' 'minoritarian,' and so on: this is not so much a matter of a human being becoming revolutionaries or artists or minorities, . . . but of becoming itself as intrinsically transformative, creative, and marginal–and as intrinsically multiple" (p. 186)

[17] In music education this involves taking chances, using intuition, developing unusual combinations. For instance, we may make music according to students' and teachers' needs and interests, evaluated not by an appeal to standards, but ethically in terms of contexts and subsequent action. Replacing published scores and pre-packaged materials with music of our everyday lives as students and teachers in music, we may negotiate musical as well as educational outcomes, engaging with music in terms of thinking and doing.

[18] "[M]orality presents us with a set of constraining rules, . . . that judge actions and intentions by considering them in relation to transcendent values; . . . ethics is a set of optional rules that assess what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved" (Deleuze, 1995, 100).

[19] "*Aido Hwedo*: The Rainbow Serpent; also a representation of all ancient divinities who must be worshipped but whose names and faces have been lost in time" (Lorde, 1986, 75).

[20] Known and unknown.

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