

CONTEXTUALIZING PERFORMATIVE IDENTITY:
A SYNTHESIS OF JUDITH BUTLER'S PERFORMATIVE PROCESS
ONTOLOGY AND MICHEL FOUCAULT'S ANALYTICS OF POWER

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ABSTRACT

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Both Michel Foucault and Judith Butler give an account of a socially constructed subject, yet both philosophers face dilemmas within their own philosophies that are solvable through a reconciliation between the two. While Foucault offers the concepts of genealogy, power and *dispositifs* to explain the how the subject comes to think, act and speak, there is no mental account of subjectivity to unify the subject and power and explain subject-durability. On the other hand, Butler provides a process ontology of performativity that allows subject-cohesion and permits subversion to power relations, yet she lacks Foucault's historical contextuality. By combining these two philosophers, one is able to give a reinforced account of subjectivity and how power is exercised that paves the way for an "Analytics of Violence," or an understanding of how violence comes to exist and is exercised.

Keywords: Performativity, Power, Process Ontology, Subjectivity, Violence.

ÖZ

EDİMSSEL KİMLİĞİN KAVRAMSALLAŞTIRMASI: JUDİTH BUTLER'İN EDİMSSEL SÜREÇ ONTOLOJİSİNİN VE MİCHEL FOUCAULT'NUN GÜÇ ANALİZLERİNİN BİR SENTEZİ

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Hem Michel Foucault, hem de Judith Butler toplumsal olarak belirlenmiş olan öznenin açıklamasını yaparlar fakat iki filozofun da kendi felsefeleri içerisinde sorunları vardır ancak bu sorunlar, iki filozofun fikirlerinin bir araya getirilmesiyle çözülebilir. Foucault öznenin düşünme, eyleme ve konuşma biçimlerini açıklamak için soykütüğü, güç ve *dispositifs* kavramlarını kullanır. Foucault özneye gücü birleştirmek ve öznenin zamansallığını açıklamak için, öznelliğin zihinsel açıklamasını ortaya koymaz. Diğer bir yandan da Butler edimselliğin süreç ontolojisini öne sürer. Bu, özne bağıllığına ve güç ilişkilerinin yıkılmasına olanak sağlar fakat Butler yine de Foucault'nun bağlamsallığından yoksundur. Bu iki filozofu bir araya getirerek öznelliğin güçlü bir hesabını verebilmek ve gücün nasıl deneyimlendiğini ortaya koyabilmek mümkün olacaktır. Böylece “Şiddetin Analizi” ya da şiddetin nasıl var olduğu ve nasıl gerçekleştirildiğinin ifadesi mümkün olabilecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Edimsellik, Güç, Süreç Ontolojisi, Öznellik, Şiddet.

To K. J. Shaffer and Lillian Maze

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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION: THE LONG WAY AROUND

This thesis is one that takes the long way around to finally get to where it is going. What started out as basic questions concerning the nature of violence quickly proved to be an illustration of the misunderstandings and predetermined assumptions that surround the phenomenon. In a post-9/11 era consumed with “terrorism” hysteria and an emergence of civil rights debates, much of the literature in identity politics, the philosophy of subjectivity, feminism and democratic theory discusses violence, but very little of it says anything about violence. There is a common presumption about what violence is and what violence entails, and my investigation into these questions found many answers lacking. This is highly problematic if one is determining ways to combat violence without being able to give a satisfactory definition of it, which always excludes a significant portion of those afflicted. Theorizing about violence in physical terms ignores the plight of those who deal with verbal and exclusionary abuse. Focusing on linguistic violence is oftentimes oblivious to forms of economic oppression and racial issues. A look into racial violence finds complex mechanisms in place, yet the limits of these mechanisms are rarely if ever agreed upon. In such a scenario, I found myself needing to turn back to the existential subject in order to even begin to confront questions of violence.

The theories of Judith Butler and Michel Foucault have been highly influential in philosophy (as well as a plethora of other fields). Upon further research, I found both of them made great headway in explaining the existence and activity of the subject in regards to its identity and its ontological status;

however, these two philosophers seemed conflicted on many levels. For starters, Foucault was highly ingrained in an increasingly bureaucratic generation coping with the mass violence and destruction of WWII. Butler has been living during a very different era where fights for civil liberties and the dilemmas of minorities and oppressed majorities (e.g., women) have come to the forefront of academic interest. It is not too surprising, then, that Foucault was immensely obsessed with explaining the present through its historical construction, which is not teleological but random and conflicted. It would also not shock anyone to see Butler addressing issues of subjective agency and collective existence in a more globalizing, quickly developing world. The goal was to find a way to combine Foucault's fruitful historical insights and understanding of power as networks of force relations that harnessed their meaning through their exercise and Butler's impressive account of the subject as constituted temporally and relying on performance to continue its existence, which is never finalized but always open to subversive potential. In better understanding the subject as such, one can begin to understand the role violence has in forming the subject, thereby moving closer to an understanding of violence that gains its meaning through its deployment via a variety of non-reducible forces. Consequently, this thesis sets up the constitution, existence and construction of the subject to make way for violence, even if violence is not the extensive topic addressed here. Such an analysis will hopefully open up paths for those most in need of resisting forms of domination and violence.

The second chapter concentrates on outlining the philosophical positions of Foucault, primarily in terms of the subject, power, genealogy and mechanisms of power (*dispositifs*). Foucault sets up a relational system of power, in contrast to repressive, substantialist theories perpetuated in traditional philosophy, to explain how the subject is constructed and comes to exist through force relations such that no *a priori* subject exists. Genealogy becomes the method by which power relations are analyzed to uncover things we often take for granted in our

daily lives—especially oppressive and domineering customs and actions—to allow for a strategizing capacity to resist and combat hegemonic oppression. However, since power is neither substantial nor unified, it only exists through its exercise, reinforcing the phenomenologist/existentialist argument that “existence precedes essence”; this means that a multitude of *forms* of power exist instead of a unified “power,” i.e., power only exists through force relations. The problem with Foucault is that he sticks to a rather antisubjectivist account of power that can lead to readings of voluntarism or determinism; he additionally has difficulties accounting for subject-durability and strong attachments to identity. Part of the reason for this is his disdain for psychoanalysis and explanations of mental processes and phenomena due to their essentialist groundings; Butler shows that these positions of relational power/multiplicity and psychic explanations need not be mutually exclusive, thus a turn towards Butler is in order.

The third chapter is concerned with giving an overlying version of Butler’s process ontology, which means that the subject never *is* itself but is always *becoming* through a process of repeating accepted social norms over time appropriately or inappropriately. The result of such a strategy, which draws heavily from both Foucault and psychoanalytic literature, is the psyche. This is a socially constructed mental space in which meaning is sutured to a signifier, such as how being athletic and crude can be sutured to “men” or “masculinity” in many cultures. However, the subject does not merely get to choose its acts at will. Reproducing a Foucauldian understanding of power, the subject—which is discursive—cites social norms to project forces that have sustained or aggregated over time, and repeating one of these norms wrong can have serious, if not fatal, repercussions. Concurrently, there is an ability to change these norms through repeating them erroneously because, like Foucault, norms establish their meaning from their usage. This allows Butler to bypass criticisms of voluntarism and determinism by falling somewhere in the middle. On top of this, she is able to

explain why the subject cannot simply reject its identity through her theories of passionate attachments (strong desires to maintain one's identity) and abjection (repudiating mannerisms or activities different than one's identity). Consequently, the subject is always constructing itself but never arrives at completion since meaning is produced in the present and never solidified completely for the future. Butler runs into some problems all the same. While she does overcome Foucault's antisubjectivist difficulties with an account of psychic formation and subject-durability, she often abstracts her thought when discussing psychoanalysis. Without more contextualization, she fails to allot the strategizing capacity Foucault proposes, thus leaving her theory capable but somewhat blind to how to approach any given situation. Additionally, she has a habit of positing a subject unity that Foucault—and sometimes Butler herself—fought against. For these reasons, the third chapter focuses on synthesizing Butler and Foucault in such a way that the weaknesses are complemented by each other's philosophies.

The fourth chapter works towards a synthesis of the similarities and differences in the philosophy of power, the subject and identity of both Butler and Foucault. This requires confining the Foucauldian subject to a psychic paradigm wherein a certain level of durability and persistence of identity is allotted over time. Simultaneously, Butler's psyche is open to contingency and contestation as many of the psychoanalytic tools she reinforces and relies on (e.g., foreclosure, self-reflexivity, internalization) are portrayed to be ahistorical facets of subject-formation, a claim that is unsustainable. By historicizing these mechanisms of subjection, a more comprehensive, more contextualized map can be drawn of these mechanisms and their historical formation, thus allowing a more cogent strategizing potential. This entails a historical awareness on Butler's part; while she herself does not have to perform this historical analysis, her theory of process ontology must be opened up for such investigations to be performed within its framework. What is left is a subject that is never wholly unified nor never wholly fragmented but consistently and permanently

somewhere in between attempting to reconcile this difference. Butler's process of performativity, passionate attachments and abjection are shown to complement Foucault's understanding of power, genealogy and *dispositifs*, clearing the way for the final section which demonstrates the implications of such a synthesis through two case studies while also briefly outlining the incompleteness of such a synthesis. A further analysis of violence and its parameters must be performed.

The fifth chapter puts the methodology developed throughout the thesis into play to show the reciprocal necessity Butler and Foucault have for each other by analyzing the case studies of Black women and Black gay men in the context of the U.S. In the first case study, it is shown that Butler's psychoanalytic tools, often discussed in essentialist and universalizing terms, have a great deal of flexibility and multiplicity that Butler does not permit; however, Foucault simultaneously needs Butler's psyche to explain subject-durability and power-sustainability. In the second case study, Black gay men enunciate the split identities that construct a coherent psyche that can only be explained through Foucault's "historical awareness"; this calls on Butler to structure the desire to keep an attachment to identities, even when those identities may be oppressive. In both cases, the construction of identity is revealed as a very violent process commencing from an original violence that the subject never recovers from. In elucidating such a methodology, it composes itself as only a partial one that requires a further analysis into violence if it is to more fully portray identities *de facto* and enable a strategizing potential from such a methodological inquiry into contextualized subjectivity. Thus, a call for an "Analytics of Violence" directed through the provisions set out in this thesis is laid out so that a more promising approach to strategizing domination-resistant subversions—although not ones that can control the situation entirely—can be put into place practically as well as structure a more holistic "mapping out" of the subject.

CHAPTER 2

FOUCAULT'S KINK: AN "ANALYTICS OF POWER"

(2.1) Introduction

Arising from French existentialism of the WWII generation, Michel Foucault became a figurehead in philosophy and the humanities by discussing power, knowledge and truth; this led him to be one of the most praised yet, simultaneously, reviled thinkers of the twentieth century, categorized across academia as a nihilist (Moynihan 1997), a post-structuralist/modernist (Foucault 1994a), a proto-Nietzschean (Kelly 2009), a radical (Miller 1993), a sexist (Moi 1985) and even a neo-conservative (Fraser 1994). The sheer range of his genealogies, in addition to a literary style of writing, gave way to a well of inquisitive potential, but these were also grounded in ambiguity or shifting projects. Regardless of one's opinion of him, Foucault left the Modernist paradigm with serious fissures, ones that have rippled throughout the philosophical tradition. In this chapter, Foucault's explanations of power, genealogy and *dispositifs* are presented to explain how *contingency births subjects*. Beginning in the 1970s, Foucault began discussing his conception of power, which contrasted with customary notions of repressive and sovereign power. Furthermore, his genealogy allowed theoreticians and activists to investigate how power functions in our "present," contemporary society (Foucault 2001c, 2003f). Through genealogy, one could map out the operations of power through its "mechanisms" (*dispositifs*), and thus establish how the subject comes to exist and determine itself and others. After laying out key

Foucauldian ideas, I conclude this chapter by entertaining some problems Foucault faces; these problems are shown to be solvable by the theories of Judith Butler in the next chapter.

(2.2) *Le Pouvoir: An Analytics of Power*

History of Sexuality: Vol. I commences with an explanation of how power is commonly accepted in the Western tradition.¹ Historically, power has been understood as the force exerted by a dominator over submissive subjects; this characterization paints power such that one “never establishes any connection between power and sex [or any other identifier] that is not negative: rejection, exclusion, refusal, blockage, concealment, or mask” (Foucault 1990, 83). For example, Karl Marx believes the bourgeoisie exploits the working class, and Niccolò Machiavelli affirms that the monarch’s role is to oversee and rule “his” subjects. This idea of a repressive regime, usually a monarch or a state, is “actually represented in a more-or-less uniform fashion throughout Western societies under a negative, that is to say a *juridical* form”—in that they set the criteria for legality and illegality—and has been equated to sovereign power (e.g., Tadros 1998; Danaher et al. 2000), which is the power enforced by a sovereign force (Foucault 1980b, 201); however, juridical, or repressive, power is a misconception that arises from the view that power is a substantial entity that can be sovereignly owned or controlled and is always restrictive, never productive. Alan Sheridan (2005) explains that this is not to say repression is excluded by Foucault, as Jean Baudrillard (2007) argues, but is one of many tactics employed through a relational system of forces (168). In this vein, Foucault elaborates a new understanding of “*le pouvoir*” (power) that is relational, working non-uniformly across societies by means of relationships established between socially constructed subjects or the subject and social institutions (Foucault 1990, 85); power is “a more-or-less organised, hierarchical, co-ordinated cluster of relations” (Foucault 1980b, 198). For example, a dictator or a monarch does not

have power but exercises power that is allotted by their relation (or position) within a social system that gives value to the authority of a centralized, authoritative government.

Foucault's concentration on power during the 1970s was not a theoretical turn from his earlier archeological work, as he rejected the notion of a "theory" of power (Foucault 1990, 82), but rather an analytic turn.ⁱⁱ The aim was not only to shun normative, universal explanations of power, but also to demonstrate that power is relational, resulting in various systems and solidifications of forces; it must also be contextualized to be comprehended pragmatically (Foucault 1883a, 209). Felix Driver (1994) highlights that "Foucault posed apparently more modest questions about *how* power is exercised in particular sites and settings" in place of a conventional, substantializing theory (117). For these reasons, Foucault set about an "Analytics of Power" in *History of Sexuality: Vol. I* to distinguish some general "features" of power—in contrast to definitively labeling it—which is nothing but varying, conflicting and heterogeneous force *relations*. To do this, Foucault not only needed to rethink "*le pouvoir*," but he had to destroy a whole understanding of it.

Power does not merely have a sense of force or restriction, but also implicates notions of the abilities of the subject, i.e., what the subject is or is not capable of doing, that are literally lost in translation.ⁱⁱⁱ On top of this, power is not a unified influence, but a multiplicity of forces stretching across all social interactions, leading Foucault to assert, "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault 1990, 93). *The power*, or "*le pouvoir* (*the power*; in French, the article is necessary), does not exist because power is relational, coming into existence due to contextual circumstances, e.g., "State" powers only make sense in a context where governments exist as a forceful entity: "Power in the substantive sense, '*le pouvoir*, doesn't exist" (Foucault 1980b, 198). In fact, Foucault moves to de-abstract how one confronts power; he had something rather literal and reified in

mind when he discussed power relations: “A relationship in which one person tries to control the conduct of the other” (Foucault 2003e, 34). Furthermore, these power relations are “immanent,” or intrinsic, to power itself (Foucault 1990, 98); in other words, the network of relations whereby one tries to control both the actions of others and their own *is* power, which is why it is non-substantial, “concrete,” but instead relies on relationality—therefore, power cannot exist in isolation from the subject (Lynch 2011, 21). Moreover, if power is viewed relationally, any force only works to the extent that a counterforce is present, thereby tracing the inherent existence of resistance to force relations themselves; for example, if I wish to force my son to act as a “Man,” it is only to the extent that there is a possibility for him *not* to act as one, i.e., resistance to forces is always present to establishing networks of forces and counterforces (Foucault 1990, 94). Yet, if power is in fact a “coordinated (in the event, no doubt, ill-coordinated) cluster of relations,” a “cluster” open in that there is potential for alterity and a lack of finalization, then the inquiry of power must “provide oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of relations of power” (Foucault 1980b, 199).

Many have argued that this leaves the reader little to work with, something Baudrillard famously drove home by claiming Foucault omits everything “*concerning the simulacrum of power itself*” (2007, 50). However, Baudrillard still posits an ahistoricity—a substantiality—to power while Foucault concentrates on the contingent manifestations made up by a smorgasbord of force relations (Foucault 1990, 94); Mark G. E. Kelly (2009) testifies that power is not the “object” of analysis but a “relational modality” that arises from its own historicity and context, i.e., it is the *result*—*not* the *cause*—of historical circumstances, thus not as a transcendental entity or Baudrillard’s “*simulacrum*” (34). Power also proves not to be solely restrictive, but it is productive (Foucault 1990, 1980b) to the extent that it produces the subject and the social field, i.e., it produces, not restricts, the knowledge(s) and truth(s) by which the subject lives,

which is the point Foucault wanted to make in *History of Sexuality: Vol. I* (O'Farrell 2005, 100). In effect, the subject is only partially shaped by restrictive mechanisms, such as disciplinary techniques and the foreclosure of sexuality (which are themselves socially constructed techniques), but it also depends on the capacities power provides it with. In an age of human rights and NGOs, one can hardly object that these enable the subject in ways it would not be otherwise; simultaneously, these institutions are the effect of power struggles that inhibit the subject through constructed constitutions (whether written or not) to give the subject legal and social capabilities. On the one hand, power(s) is dependent upon relations to catalyze its effectiveness; on the other hand, this implies that the subject is the catalyst, or the point-of-reference, connecting power relations (Kelly 2009, 66). The subject, therefore, is positioned in the Foucauldian system as both the catalyst and the effect of power relations.

The implications of Foucault's schema of power has had drastic implications for subjectivity (*assujettissement*), in turn giving rise to an array of interpretations, misconceptions and criticisms. To complicate matters more, Foucault claims in his later works that *assujettissement* had been his philosophical focus all along: "My objective, instead [of power], has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (Foucault 1983b, 208). One consequence of the relational subject is that it comes to exist (in regards to social roles, a discursive understanding of the world, and historical capabilities) through contingent, historically-specific networks of power relations. While others (e.g. Laclau and Mouffe 2001) have used the relational subject to mean that they exist through a network of linguistic signs, Foucault eschews this conception to make a stronger assertion: "It is not enough to say that the subject is constituted in a symbolic system...It is constituted in real practices—historically analysable practices" (Foucault 1983a, 250). Discourses deployed by the social sciences and cultural structures at large work in sync, rather than in solitude, with institutional practices to form the

subject. Simultaneously, Foucault asserts that power is nonsubjective, which some (e.g., Lynch 2011) argue is contradictory as it works through the subject; Margaret McLaren (2002) clarifies that nonsubjectivity means the subject never *owns* power but “participate[s] in it” in that the subject is enmeshed within and constituted —brought into existence—by power relations that depend on the subject’s continued activity to propagate their force wherein “much of [the subject’s] participation is beyond the control of the individual” (38). The subject is not a prediscursive, transcendental entity that is then shaped by power relations; it is created by power, making the subject a historical entity where no *a priori* faculties or experiences can be taken for granted or given a privileged, “off limits” status from analysis and critique. This strategy would later be adopted by Judith Butler in the same vein to promote the discursivity of subjectivity; however, instead of grounding the subject in its history, she argues it is constituted and endures through the production of a mental process where meaning is repeatedly asserted, i.e., the psyche.

If this is the case, does power entail a deterministic grounding of subjectivity, or does the subject have the capacity for free acts? After deterministic interpretations emerged, Foucault spent his later years trying to debunk these accusations and demystify “power” by clarifying the situation of the subject. His main obstacle was to elaborate upon bodies which themselves have a history, often read as a reduction of subjectivity to materiality.^{iv} Foucault does not deny brute matter in the sense of a Kantian “thing-in-itself,” but he does revoke a referential understanding of meaning in that language, or concepts and ideas, do not explain the essence of something in the “real world.” He insists that matter always comes to us through a meaningful discourse or context formulated through power relations: “The body is the surface of the inscription of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of the dissolution of the Me (to which it tries to impart the chimera of a substantial unity), and a volume

in perpetual disintegration” (Foucault 2003a, 356). Material is the result of a discursive system that has solidified meanings through the exertion of power relations such that the subject comes to understand “material” as “natural” or innate; it is the discourses and practices shaping culture and thought which give a semblance of substantiality to “material”:

In a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize, and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of a discourse. (Foucault 1994b, 31)

Material is not some brute matter (i.e., “thing-in-itself”) that floats around in an objective space; power relations, through discourse and practices, produce it. For example, the mannerisms associated with masculinity are not “natural” but the byproducts of discourses and practices that have implemented this categorization of gendered-acts over time. This train of thought also dispels the criticism introduced by Baudrillard (2007) that if sex is discursive, it would not exist before the instantiation of discourse, which is not the case (45). Materiality’s cohesion relies on the subject’s ability to repeat or reinforce relations through actions, practices, institutions and discourses—a position defended both by Todd May (2006) and Joseph Rouse (2005), the latter of whom claims that power depends upon its “reenactment or reproduction over time as a sustained power *relationship*” (110). Butler comes to excel at pushing this strand of thought forward to overcome some of the problematic conclusions some have drawn from Foucault’s theories by honing in on the enduring systems of knowledge and subjectivity through repetitious acts; this further explains the relation between power and “matter,” presented in the next chapter. Foucault understands material as constructed through networks of power relations, arguing that “we should try to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects” (Foucault 1994b, 35).

The confusion engulfing materiality has rested mostly on “docile bodies,” put forward in *Discipline and Punish*, which are often viewed as absolutely passive.^v If matter is the result of a process of materialization, then even our own bodies are historically formed. In the context of disciplinary power and “docile bodies,” the body is constantly broken down and reconceptualized in a new context. According to O’Farrell, the subject is “constantly dissolved” by the implemented disciplinary tactics, such as military drills and breaking the individualistic will of the soldier, to be “recreated” within a new system of knowledge and social intelligibility, which is the function of a collectivist mentality in the military (2005, 113). This understanding of the body, and thus the subject, that is shaped and constituted through a process of normalization (McWhorter 2003; Ehler 2008; Feder 2007) projected a misreading of Foucault (and, as will be shown, Butler interprets him in this erroneous manner); the importance that social norms take in shaping the subject is a result of a contingent form of power, i.e., disciplinary power, rather than the deployment of “normalization” as used in contemporary identity politics (Foucault 1980b, 204). To read Foucault as proposing a theory of normalization and “docile bodies” is to universalize what he saw as one way among *many* through which the subject was influenced by power relations. For this reason, I will call the process of norm conformity, as Foucault understands it, “*normality*” and reserve “*normalization*” for its contemporary usage in theory. The ability to go against the grain of disciplinary normality remains—as resistance is inherent to force relations—although undesired consequences may be brought, dispelling the attack of determinism; additionally, various other forms of power, e.g., biopower, pastoral power, or governmentality, effect the body in active, participatory ways.

If power is not a unified theory but obtains its meaning through its historical construction and performance, then it follows that power is not necessarily unified but can manifest in different forms. Moreover, if power is merely force relations, it would only lack a substantialist reading under such a

philosophical stance, which is precisely the route Foucault took. Oftentimes, the focus is put on disciplinary power, which developed out of his work on the prison; according to this form of power, the subject is individualized by force relations so as to allow these forces to work more efficiently on the subject's actions, such as schools, factories, the military and prisons (Foucault 1995, 2001c). However, a swarm of other rationalities through which forces are exerted are in play as well, some more influentially than others in contemporary society and some are more present in certain sectors of social interaction. For example, biopower (or biopolitics) focuses on the population in contrast to the individual, utilizing totalizing tactics for the "health" or endurance of the population; one can see this at work both in multiculturalism and liberalism as well as the work camps of Soviet Russia, concentration camps of Nazi Germany and internment camps of the WWII-era U.S (Foucault 1990, 2003c). It is the underlying epistemological force driving these various rationalities that arose out of a more scientific and less theocratic paradigm of social existence. Other famous forms include governmentality, or the art of governing people through both governmental and non-governmental institutions, and pastoral power, or the guiding power of a teacher, priest or rabbi most powerful during the transition between aristocratic and mercantile systems of economy (ibid., 2003b, 2007).

Since Foucault does not believe meaning references objects outside of social paradigms, he concludes that no prediscursive subject, i.e., intrinsic subjective existence or innate faculties/rights, exists (Foucault 1980b, 204), but as a subject in a relational system, the human being relies on "the historically given context in which [it] finds [itself]"—and thus other subjects—for constitution and a continued existence in a discursive world (May 2006, 16-17). Moreover, historical constitution does not entirely determine or control the subject but merely shapes it and limits its possibilities through influences, coercion, restrictions, incentives and discipline, wherein Kelly argues, "Subjectivity is constituted specifically in connection with certain precise, historically-constituted

‘experiences’” (2009, 92). Yet, it is precisely within these constructed bodies and identities that the subject is able to resist dominating forms of power relations (Foucault 1980a, 56); in other words, the subject deploys strategies, but these strategies rarely terminate as intended since they are nonautonomous actions. They are open to contestation, rejection or manipulation because power relations, and the strategies that employ them, are nonsubjective, meaning they are not absolutely controllable by any subject. The very body that restricts the subject also poses the potential to liberate it from certain shackles. The subject is a historically constituted being constructed indeterminately through practices and discourses of power relations that coerce, restrict, and compel the subject to act in a certain way. These power relations rely on intentional strategies that are inherently nonautonomous and inadvertent since they are open to counterforces of subterfuges, subversions or blockages: for example, the intentions behind the prison evolved into unintended organized crime (Foucault 1995). Thus, Foucault believes that subjects “may be actors in the process to the extent that they participate in it; and the process occurs to the extent that men [or any subject] decide to be its voluntary actors” (Foucault 2003f, 45). However, power does not rely entirely on any independent “actor,” so how is resistant actions supposed to counteract the influence of tenacious relations of power? How much choice is actually involved?

Genealogy is developed as a tool to deal with this problem the subject finds itself in by investigating its taken for granted assumptions, or “banal facts” as Foucault calls them, concerning it and the world it inhabits. For instance, a subject born into a contemporary Western setting will deduce certain notions of sexuality and connect those to its identity, not questioning the underlying historic-discursivity of sexuality.^{vi} Foucault explains, “What we have to do with banal facts is to discover, to try to discover, which specific and perhaps original problems are connected with them” (Foucault 2003b, 181). The focus of genealogy, if it is truly directed at understanding how the subject comes to exist,

rests on understanding the manner of contingency of our bodies, thoughts and identities. In the following section, I lay out the parameters and method of Foucault's genealogy, including his usage of domination and resistance. This sets up an analysis of Foucault's mechanisms of power (*dispositifs*) that contingently shape the subject.

(2.3) Genealogy: A Theory of Domination and Resistance

In one of his later lectures, Foucault defines genealogy as “the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today” (Foucault 1994b, 22). The synthetic weaving of “erudite knowledge” and “local memories” enabled Foucault to understand the commencement of “banal facts,” or practices/discourses the subject takes to be natural, innate, but were in fact historically constructed. Undermining universality and “subject-ive” assumptions, these analyses demonstrate the nodes of contestation and flexibility within any given social structure. Steven Best (2005) notes that genealogy, under the scrutiny of historical documents, rejects pure “essences or identities” to demonstrate the subject's own contingency as well as that of its world (110). While the dominant understanding of Foucault, this is a mischaracterization of his usage of genealogy: “The main objective of these struggles is to attack not so much ‘such or such’ an institution of power, or group, or elite, or class, but rather a technique, a form of power” (Foucault 1983b, 212). It does not set out to explain what power is; as an analytic tool, it aims at the subject's historical situatedness within a heterogeneous network of power relations that instantiate meaning, the social world and the subject itself, not to overthrow all theories of universality for the sake of making a point.

Clarifying one's social circumstances relies on the analysis of power, yet this holds that power is always historically situated; thus, genealogy *must* be historically contextualized to obtain a level of effectiveness^{vii}: “We have to know

the historical conditions which motivate our conceptualization. We need a historical awareness of our present circumstance” (Foucault 1983b, 209). This historical backdrop of social systems runs fairly close to Heideggerian instrumentality on this point: “Power must, I think, be analyzed as something that circulates, or rather as something that functions *only when it is part of a chain*” (Foucault 2003c, 29). While this correlates to Heideggerian “instrumentality” (Heidegger 2008), it also is an essential asset of a relational power; for Foucault, identifiers—“real” or ideal—do not exist individually and in positivity but through their relational production within a system in which statements, actions or thoughts come to make sense. For example, the racial signifiers “Latino” or “Black” exist against a social backdrop where varying skin pigments *matter*—have importance—and they only exist in relation to other racial identifiers in specific, historical contexts. Foucault’s grounding of contextualism is the “historical *a priori*,” or the social world of meaningful actions and thoughts which was given to the subject (Foucault 1989); this later becomes Butler’s “grid of intelligibility” whereby norms (force relations) are structured and entrusted with power through their relationality. O’Farrell explains the historical *a priori* as relying on historical situatedness in contrast to transcendental formulation in order to connect this to genealogy: “Each historical period orders knowledge and constructs concepts according to certain rules. These rules can be deduced from a study of the traces of past knowledge and practices” (2005, 63). First, genealogy examines the contingency of “banal facts,” or social assumptions, accepted as unquestionable and natural; second, it assembles a historical grid of intelligibility to understand the social contexts in which the subject exists.

Since a grid of intelligibility is to explain the *discursive* subject through the process of historical power formations, Foucault’s analysis revolves not around *what* power is but the *how* of power, or the way that power’s exertion defines it: “The interesting thing is to ascertain, not what overall projects presides over all these developments, but, how, in terms of strategy, the different pieces were set

in place” (Foucault 1980a, 62).^{viii} However, this does not minimize power; the scope is actually maximized by understanding social institutions as deriving from previous epochs with set intentions in mind: “Sometimes this ‘how’ produces relatively large-scale programs of action, such as Bentham’s Panopticon; at other times, more immediately practical, piecemeal, and technical solutions are improvised” (Ransom 1997, 44). Genealogy thus “designates relationships between partners,” which is power, and lays out the relational system in which the subject, as historically established, comes to think, act and speak according to the exercise of different power relations: “‘How,’ not in the sense of ‘How does it manifest itself?’ but ‘By what means is it exercised?’ and ‘What happens when individuals exert (as they say) power over others?’” (Foucault 1983b, 217). Essentially, genealogy works from within power relations by asking *how* its methods are employed (Foucault 2003a, 354); the domain is what the subject takes to be “natural,” such as sexuality or government.^{ix}

In this picture, Foucault argues that resistance is always interior to power and force relations, implicating domination, implies potential to resist (Foucault 1990, 95-96), an often misunderstood or debated claim resulting in confusion and skepticism. Patricia Moynihan (1997) argues Foucault reduces domination to oppression, i.e., the subject extorts fear from other subjects for control (207), and Thomas McCarthy (1994) criticizes the emphasis on absolute contingency while Foucault also insists resistance is inherent to power (253). There are critiques of Foucauldian resistance as well, with some (Brenner 1994; McLaren 2002) condemning its ambiguity and narrowness.^x In reality, domination and resistance—both of which are “interior” to power, i.e., exercised through power relations and not a superstructure or hermeneutical kernel (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983)—are *general* ways of taking about methodological occurrences that must be contextualized. Foucauldian power is not only a relationality of human beings but insists the subject is constructed via these relations to the extent that one tries to (un)intentionally control the actions of others: “The exercise of power is not

simply a relationship between partners, individual or collective; it is a way in which certain actions modify others...Power exists only when it is put into action” (Foucault 1983, 219). Boys being dressed in “manly” clothes and exposed to sports while girls are thrown in dresses and given dolls is an instance of this attempt to control actions. Foucault places power relations as contingent, relational structures instead of transcendental entities, only existing in practice and exercise.^{xi} It is this contextualism that many critics often overlook, or detest, in Foucault; however, contextualism must be discussed if one is to understand domination and resistance.

Firstly, Foucauldian domination is deeply intertwined with relational power, wherein domination includes restriction or solidification of certain relationships that make it difficult to adjust them: “The manifold relationships of force...are the basis for wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole...Major dominations are the hegemonic effects that are sustained by all these confrontations” (Foucault 1990, 94). However, domination is a filler for a relationship that involves a solidification that resists altercation, yet not necessarily an inequality. Kelly explains, “Power is neither good nor bad in itself, just so long as it is reversible” (2009, 75). Foucault at times refers to domination as bad (1983a, 2003a), yet I believe to make an ethical claim regarding domination would be erroneous and in contrast with Foucault’s project. One could here read Foucault in a Humean “customs” light, wherein the subject makes certain assumptions about reality that are necessary to sustain lifestyles and life in general (Hume 2000). There are many relationships of *submission* open to contestation, such as a parent-child relationship (influenced by legal and social norms) or a teacher-student relationship (wherein the teacher is judged by their ability to teach). Submission becomes domination when paths of resistance are eliminated. Consequently, Foucault argues domination is always historically situated—and we require some of these solidified assumptions, such as one’s wages being paid or trust in medical institutions—using the term generally to

describe types of power networks establishing themselves as hesitant or immune to change: “Once we begin to talk about power relations...we are talking about domination, about an infinitely dense and multiple domination *that never comes to an end*. There is no escape from domination, and there is therefore no escape from history” (Foucault 2003c, 111, my italics). A teacher who is not regulated by student performance or complaints from others would be a relationship of domination rather than submission. This is not to say fighting against domination is frivolous, but instead Foucault explains that domination, in regards to power relations, is always contestable (although it may be much more difficult to resist); the forces exerted against domineering, hegemonic power always gives the possibility for counterforces to arise, for if it did not, it would cease to be power for Foucault—it would be a relationship of complete passivity, but not power (Foucault 1983b, 221). A subject would no longer “strategize” and *try* to control the actions of others but merely would. Alongside this, resistance is interior to power, yet it is also an essential polarity to domination.

A common misreading of resistance is that it is a refusal to submit to power relations. In reality, resistance is a *type* of power relation attempting to reject the *intentionality* of another power relation (Kelly 2009). A hunger strike performed to object to unfair policies may be viewed as a “passive” and “peaceful” act of resistance, but it nonetheless requires certain force relations, e.g., self-discipline and physical exertion/endurance. If “relationships of power” are nothing more than “an action upon an action” (Foucault 1983, 220), then “not only do individuals circulate between [power’s] threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power” (Foucault 1994b, 36). Domination and resistance are not ahistorical occurrences; they are explicitly historical because they rely on historical subjects and paradigms to garner their relational force, both subjectivizing and subjecting, and therefore the study of these occurrences must be contextualized in order to be of any pragmatic use as “domination,” “resistance” and “power” are empty on their own: “It is certain

that the mechanisms of subjection cannot be studied outside their relations to the mechanisms of exploitation and domination” (Foucault 1983, 213). Thus, Jon Simons’ (1995) negative reading of domination and resistance as “undertheorized” (83) by Foucault is positively interpreted by Kelly (2009) requiring them to be contextualized for intelligibility, which many theories of power, oppression and domination do not endorse.

According to this train of thought, domination is never the “complete” domination Hobbesian or Machiavellian philosophies purport to advance; instead, domination is always a strategy that works on the actions of the subject, but this subject is never entirely required to submit to these tactics, i.e., resistant forces are always in play. Any time a force is exerted, a counterforce is close at hand—with varying degrees of strength—to combat hegemonic power. At times, such as the Iranian Revolution in 1979 or the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the U.S., this is a successful resistance; under different circumstances, such as the attempts of opposition media outlets attempting to resist government forces in present day Turkey, Egypt, Russia and China, this has been less of a success (if not a complete failure)—even though the potential to resist is still in play. Since domination is not absolute but includes potential for resistance, Foucault is able to test the parameters of a new outline of freedom and the role of choice, or the “field of possibilities”:

Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several relations and diverse comportments may be realized. (Foucault 1983, 221)

Traditional freedom, especially of the Enlightenment, are eschewed by Foucault and replaced with a relational freedom that considers the variety of choices available within any given network of (counter)force relations and the social context in which they are enmeshed that allots the “field of possibilities,” including the construction of new possibilities from the synthesis of material (objects) available; however, the creation of choice *ex nihilo* ceases to exist.

Genealogy advocates understanding resistance and domination as open enough to establish a critical lens to investigate contextualized power relations in a grid of intelligibility, i.e., a map of how subjects come to understand, speak and act by asserting meaning, wherein the subject can comprehend networks of power relations and forms of domination and resistance in its culture.^{xiii} The mapping out of power in this way is one of the strongest Foucauldian influences in Butler, allowing her at times to elicit resistant techniques through subversive counterforces. With such a map pinpointing the weaknesses in dominant regimes, whether political or epistemological, much more pragmatic strategies can be devised to combat unwanted domination—often going unnoticed until pointed out by genealogical inquiry—and thereby enlarges the field of possibilities.

In the end, genealogy analyzes how the subject comes to exist at any given time due to historical circumstances, with Simons reiterating Foucault's claim that identities are not mere linguistic matter but have real consequences, such that being tied to an identity can have discriminatory or deadly results (1995, 98). Moreover, Foucault's relational power explains how the subject's own body is constructed via power relations; bodies are not "materiality" as brute matter but instead constructed within a domain of forces and counterforces that produces networks of norms from which meaning is derived by which the subject interacts with and uses objects, discourses and institutions (as well as bringing the subject into existence in the first place) in an attempt to manipulate itself and others via power. Genealogy is not deconstructive to make room for reconstruction, as Jacques Derrida did; it attempts to make what is present less stagnant, calcified, working on the axis of flexibility and potentiality for alteration: "[Genealogy] disturbs what was previously considered immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself" (Foucault 2003a, 356). Foucault's quagmire is that if the subject is a

historical body onto which the subject is inscribed through powers, how does Foucault propose to focus on the subject, and not power, in his philosophy (Foucault 1983b, 208)? The answer is an analysis of *dispositifs*.

(2.4) *Dispositifs* and an Analytics of Subjectivity

If one is alarmed by the lack of a prediscursive subject here, some solace can be found in Foucault's mechanisms of power—*dispositifs* in the original French. Johanna Oksala (2005) explains that Foucault does not navigate history to determine what the subject *is*, but what *makes* the subject and its ways of experiencing the world possible (107). *Dispositifs* function through different *kinds* of power that produce essences rather than vice versa: "I'm starting off from an apparatus [an alternative translation of *dispositif*] of sexuality, a fundamental historical given which must be an indispensable point of departure for us" (Foucault 1980b, 218).^{xiii} It is from this existence that Foucault can determine an essence, thus highlighting the centrality of *dispositifs* in his Analytics of Power: "What are their mechanisms, their effects and their relations?" (Foucault 1994b, 26). Not only do *dispositifs* come to create and shape the subject in a multiplicity of powers (e.g., biopower, governmentality, disciplinary power); they need the subject—often divided among these different forms of control and persuasion—in order to continue to exist. The subject's participation, whether willing or unwilling, is required by *dispositifs* to harness their force. Genealogy deciphers how power functions through different *dispositifs* working with or against one another (e.g., biopower and disciplinary power complement and contradict one another through individualizing and collectivizing techniques). In effect, *dispositifs* tie together many different relations of power into a uniform and concentrated hegemony: "A thoroughly *heterogeneous* ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural

forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions” (Foucault 1980b, 194). The *homogeneous functioning* of these elements forms a *dispositif*.^{xiv}

The *dispositif* is an inquisitive marking system developed by Foucault to study discourses in connection with institutional/social practices. *Dispositifs* allow the genealogists to explore a spectrum of elements within the scope of one area (e.g., sex, race, discipline) (Brenner 1994, 687). Race in the U.S. is an example: it works through a perpetuated class of criminology, unemployment tactics, linguistic exclusion, historical erasure and a projected hypersexuality. These tactics greatly vary in context, yet they cooperate along a singular axis of race in discourses and institutions. Thus, when Habermas argues, “Genealogy only confirms that the validity claims of counterdiscourses count no more and no less than those of the counter discourses in power” (Habermas 1994, 93), he ignores the objective of genealogy, which is to ask, “In what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory, what place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints?” (Foucault 2003f, 53). Contrary to Sheridan’s (2005, 187-88) unitary-functionality reading of *dispositifs*, Genealogy is not a theory of unity or normative bases; it works through the dispersal and problematization, or putting into question what was previously accepted, of norms shaping the way the subject exists.

The question for Foucault is thus not about *what* power or *dispositifs* are but *how* they work, i.e., *how* does something become connected as an essential facet of the subject’s identity. Foucault’s analysis centers on *dispositifs* which both constitute the subject historically and are themselves historical patterns of functionality:

The apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain coordinates of knowledge which issue from it but, to an equal degree, condition it. This is what the apparatus consists in: strategies of relations of forces supporting, and supported by, types of knowledge (Foucault 1980b, 196)

The subject is produced within and through these *dispositifs*, but the ability to resist them, or forces related to them, are an intrinsic ingredient of power. *The subject is a product of power, but it is not exhausted by power.* In light of this, Aaron Schutz (2004) claims Foucault’s “types” of power are presented as a phenomenon present across a culture, and it would not be a stretch to say this is how many critics and supporters have read disciplinary power (including Butler). However, *dispositifs*—and power at large—are not enforced to the same extent at every level of society, stretching into every crevice of the social space (Foucault 1983b, 226); instead, “types” of power are concatenations of concentrated power relations functioning differently throughout the society the subject inhabits to form *dispositifs*. Nor are *dispositifs* always *enforced* but are *regulatory*, with Roger Deacon (1998) writing, “Modern societies may be ‘disciplinary’ but [they] are not ‘disciplined’” (131). Deacon’s quote stresses that *dispositifs* are put into place to enforce disciplinary regimes, but they do not always function as intended nor are they successful. Rather, *dispositifs* suture aspects of identity to form the subject in a relational manner in ways the subject comes to take as normal, accepting as “facts”/“nature,” such as one’s “sex,” “race” or “Nation.” The question becomes, as McWhorter inquisitively asks, “How and why did this region of human experience come to exist and get organized as it has?” (McWhorter 2004, 41).

Genealogy is a pragmatic and ongoing activity—rather than a permanent theory—to reveal or clarify the calcified *dispositifs* through which the subject is constructed and into which it comes to exist in historically contextualized ways. Alongside this, power relations are open to altercations—with difficulty or ease—that can be mapped out via domination and resistance that are inherent to power while also being historically specific. As a result, the subject is never finalized nor whole but is dispersed and torn between an array of polemical *dispositifs*, relations and positions within any given society. While this is a very

fruitful and revolutionary analysis of power, it still succumbs to some difficulties, most centralizing around Foucault's antisubjectivist account in correspondence with his claims about the subject.

(2.5) Conclusion: The Trouble With Subjects

As discussed in this chapter, the belief that Foucault resorts to a deterministic or relativistic aporia ignores Foucault's Nietzsche-inspired genealogical critique of universalizing theories to antagonize relationships of authority, discipline and functionality.^{xv} With this, the inquiry into past paradigms and shifts in power does not provide answers to contemporary dilemmas: "You can't find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people...I think that the ethico-political choice we have to make every day is to determine which is the main danger" (Foucault 1983a, 230-31). Even so, Foucault's ideas become puzzling when discussing the subject, commenting in one place that the subject is "an effect of finalisation to an objective" (Foucault 1980b, 204). The subject is not prediscursive for Foucault; rather, the subject, as well as other nominal identifiers such as "Man" or "the individual" (Foucault 2002), is instantiated and constructed through power relations. Consequently, Foucault argues at times that social constructs are confined to merely the brute matter formed by historical impositions and inscriptions: "We must not place sex on the side of reality, and sexuality on that of confused ideas and illusions; sexuality is a very real historical formation" (Foucault 1990, 158). However, he also rejects various forms of transcendental and psychic implications in regards to the subject, such as psychoanalysis, Marxism and structuralism (Foucault 2003e, 84), often advancing institutional practices which inscribe a mentality onto bodies, e.g., his Rio de Janeiro lectures (Foucault 2001c) or *Discipline and Punish's* "soul" (Foucault 1995). If the subject is constructed through a body "imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body," then where does the psyche—the mental

capacities and coherency of the subject—come in (Foucault 2003f, 356-57)? One could introduce the constructed “soul,” but this again is the effect of material inscription onto the body for Foucault. Would this not reduce his theory to a pure materialism if power is branded onto the body that gives rise to mental processes (Cheah 1996; Grosz 1994)? Why does the subject continue to act in one manner, especially of the repressive variety, if they could simply act in another? What adheres the subject to its particular existence, and why does the subject wish to continue this existence in certain manners? Foucault fails to explain the mental aspects of power, knowledge and truth, which has left his work open to such readings of materialism and voluntarism, of which Butler wishes to overcome in her philosophy.^{xvi}

Foucault’s distance from psychical accounts of subjectivity intensifies the dilemma of divided individuals that he avers. His focus on power’s shaping of the body often overlooks power’s construction of the psyche; his claims of “sub-individuals,” or the tension of confronting hegemonies of power within the individual, is therefore troubling: how is one to understand a divided subject without the psyche from a material theory (Foucault 1980b, 208)? On the one hand, this is a project of agonistic politics many contemporary theorists have adopted (e.g., Mouffe 2000), with a turn towards hegemonic frictions being constructed to annoy or disturb vectors of power relations and conferring altercations and a dispersion of powers: “Prefer what is positive and multiple, difference over uniformity, flows over unities, mobile arrangements over systems. Believe that what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic” (Foucault 2001b, 109). However, Foucault’s proposal of reflexivity in his later work poses the question of what is being reflected upon, who is doing the reflecting and from where. Michael Janover (1997) describes Foucauldian reflexivity as a process of self growth, and Johanna Oksala (2011) interprets the subject as a folding back on itself, yet Foucault fails to offer this psychic account while rejecting the innate instincts and drives of strict Freudianism (Freud 2006). It is Jacques Lacan who

moves away from the “instinct”-grounded basis of psychoanalysis and asserts the subject as a wholly cultural product, but he also compensates this constructivism with a psyche (Holmes 1997, 272). These two ways of dealing with subjectivity are reconciled in the philosophy of Judith Butler.

Additionally, Butler explains how the subject becomes permanently, or solidly, attached to its identity. She refers to the difficulty of simply exchanging structures of power or identity—the subject’s strong desire to keep these in place—as “passionate attachments.” In Foucault, it is difficult to pin down how to explain away the attachments the subject makes to power. Foucault claims the subject is constituted by, and thereby cannot live without, power relations (Foucault 2003a, 359). However, this argument is found lacking when faced with why the subject does not trade power formations, especially oppressive ones. If liberal governments impose constructed rights onto the subject, why is it so adamant to keep them? If discipline inculcates us in a web of guilt, why not remove it? Nadine Ehlers (2008) asks, “What initiates the marking of the individual [such as disciplinary practices]; what attaches the individual to that which is apparently their ‘identity’ [such as sexuality, especially sexualities prone to receptive violence]” (334). It remains difficult for Foucault to address these without surrendering to psychoanalysis, and, consequently, Butler’s ability to supplement these weaknesses with performative agency and subjectivity will prove fruitful to Foucault’s enterprise; moreover, his work will be shown to counteract Butler’s problems. In the following chapter, I lay out Butler’s theory of subjectivity, which is a process ontology, so as to show how it handles these problems.

CHAPTER 3

A PSYCHOANALYTIC TWIST: JUDITH BUTLER'S PROCESS OF PERFORMATIVITY

(3.1) Introduction

Foucault's encapsulation of subjectivity within power relations and historical epochs spurred Judith Butler to conceive of the way in which the subject comes into and is regulated by existence. Oftentimes, Butler is seen as a second generational Foucauldian, using his theories to go beyond him; however, this not only underestimates the authenticity of Butler's approach, but it also equates two very different aims. In linguistics, there is a debate between diachronic and synchronic production of meaning. The prior involves the evolution of words through historical usage, while the latter focuses on a specific period of time and its usages within that system. These two approaches are not mutually exclusive, and as Mark Kelly (2009) notes, Butler's philosophy focuses on the formation of the subject by means of psychoanalysis (synchronic) while Foucault's centers on the historical impositions imposed by power (diachronic). In light of this, Butler should not be viewed as *replacing* Foucault but instead *supplementing* him by describing a process ontology by which the subject and the meaningful world is put into a state of constant emergence and becoming. In this chapter, I discuss Butler's theory of performativity and how it lays the ground for a process ontology, and in doing so she overcomes some of the shortcomings of Foucault. However, I also address Butler's own dilemmas emerging from her association with psychoanalysis.

(3.2) Judith Butler's Process of Performativity

For Judith Butler, the subject is “hailed” into existence so it can be understood in social situations. “Hailed” means the subject is categorized as an identifier that attaches to (becomes) its identity, such as when one is called a boy or girl at birth. Butler refers to this process as interpellation, derived from Louis Althusser’s (2014) model in which, as a metaphor, a policeman calls to (“hails”) a passerby who accepts the call by turning towards the officer in recognition. This explanation exemplifies how the “hailing” brings the subject into existence as an identifier, here a citizen; “The sensualist, the slut, the homosexual, the transvestite, the child abuser, and madness” are other instances presented by William Connolly (1991, 65). Beyond mere name-calling, identifiers shape how the subject comes to understand itself and act; for instance, typically girls, not boys, wear dresses. Sara Salih (2002) interprets interpellation as involving an acceptance of a “hailing” (79), while Vicki Kirby (2006) aligns closer to Butler’s intent by explaining that “the subject’s presence nor compliance” is a prerequisite to be hailed (91). Butler iterates, “The terms by which we are hailed are rarely the ones we choose” (Butler 1997a, 38). On top of this, the subject needs to be interpellated for its constitution, i.e., coming into existence, in any given society; consequently, “The call is formative, if not *performative*, precisely because it initiates the individual into the subjected status of the subject” (Butler 2011, 82). In other words, the subject must be *subjected* to become a subject in the first place.¹ As the entrance into meaningful existence, interpellation begins Butler’s theory of performativity by structuring a process ontology compelling existence over time; temporality is incorporated into this primary or original act, which Butler calls “the primary vulnerability” (Butler 1997a, 26).

Identity in a Butlerian model interpellates the subject in a framework of social difference. Saussurian linguistics, read through a Derridean lens, is used to explain how identity function by means of differentiations (Butler 2010, 54). In effect, significations or identifiers have no inherent, positive meaning; their meaning is constructed through their negative values in relation to other objects

or ideas within a linguistic/social system: “Every subject position is constituted differentially, and that what is produced as the ‘constitutive outside’ of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent” (Butler 2000b, 12). The identity of difference means an identifier, such as man, has no *intrinsic* definitive qualities but obtains its meaning from what it is *not*; therefore, man is not an individual with a penis, but an individual who does *not* have a vagina, femininity, dresses, etc. The concept of the “constituted outside” is a derivative of this system: if meaning derives from difference, then any universality only has value by a necessary exclusion at some level.ⁱⁱ Therefore, identity does not arise from the subject’s individual autonomy but comes through differences within a collective social setting, or, as William Connolly asserts, “My personal identity is defined through the collective constituencies with which I identify or am identified by others” (1991, xiv).

Many theorists have qualms with this differential system, such as social theorist Naomi Zack’s (2005) rejection of a differential identity in favor of a positivistic understanding of signification and normative values via constructivism (33). In reality, Butler ascribes to a *descriptive* paradigm—in contrast to *prescriptive* methods of establishing normative imperatives—where identity formations develop by means of varying differences to ascertain their significance, albeit significances with very *real* results some critics have accused her of overlooking (e.g., Grosz 1994); Butler actually maintains that to refuse an interpellation can mean that the subject “refuse[s] only by accepting the consequences—which can be your life” (Butler 2003, 10). Neither is interpellation a one time deal; it uses repetition, or “rituals,” to augment socially sanctioned acts: “The ritual dimension of convention implies that the moment of utterance is informed by the prior and, indeed, future moments that are occluded by the moment itself” (Butler 1997a, 25). This temporal imposition of acts means

the subject never exists in isolation (it relies on collective rituals) and interpellates the present moment for future circumstances (acts are based on a historical background).

This means of reiterating what one is (becoming) and what one will be(come) is the bedrock of a process ontology where the subject never *is* but infinitely moves towards its being: the subject is *becoming*. Butler writes, “[Social] construction is neither a subject nor its acts, but a *process* of reiteration [repetition] by which both ‘subjects’ and ‘acts’ come to appear at all” (Butler 2011, xviii). Butler’s multi-layered claim adds temporality to identity, which necessitates acts be repeated over time to calcify the meaning of identifiers so as to permit their social existence. First, social norms (actions/states that are socially acceptable) arise from repeated, norm-abiding acts; falling (acting) outside these norms can range from discipline or exile to death, such as how, depending on the culture, homosexuality can lead to indifference, lashing or execution. Like Foucault, repetition uses a historical backdrop to give certain acceptable repetitions their endowment and clout: “Without that prior context, things would not give rise to affective tones as they do, but within that context, or on the presumption of such a context being in place, they surely do” (Butler 2012, 5). Moreover, repetition is not a positive, original act; it replicates an “original” that is a contingent fabrication historically constructed via power relations: “Gay is to straight *not* as copy is to original, but, rather, as copy is to copy. The parodic repetition of ‘the original’...reveals the original to be nothing other than a parody of the *idea* of the natural and the original” (Butler 2010, 43). On this topic, Salih explains that “it is the very notion of an original that is being parodied” by Butler (2002, 66), so what is being highlighted in this argument is that repetitions and normative judgments regulate the subject’s existence through social norms (Chambers and Carver 2008, 143).

Not only does this reject criticism that Butler lacks normativity as her system requires normativity for the subject's actions to make sense and have meaningful force (i.e., the subject must repeat norms) (Fraser 1995),ⁱⁱⁱ but it underlines the activity involved in identity. Butler avers that identifiers (e.g., "gender"), typically viewed as formative nouns, are in fact verbs contriving their meaning through the acting out of "gender" (Butler 2010, 34). According to Roland Faber (2011), repetitive action, or "*performability of becoming*," casts an "illusion" that identifiers are natural substances or traits of identity whereby gender, or any identifier, *is* what it *performs* (33). Identities are never finalized or fully owned, constantly being acted out, "insistently constituted, contested, and negotiated," in such a way that to *act* is to *be*, and to *be* is to *become* (Butler 2011, 44). The *appearance* of positive identifiers as substantial or intrinsic to identity, such as Freudian drives or genetic traits, is referred to by Butler as "naturalization" or "sedimentation," which are parallels of Foucault's "banal facts"; sedimentation comes to take the place of a crux in Butler's process ontology by intertwining (or explicitly *being*) her theory of "materialization" (ibid., xxiii).

Over time, norms sediment, or become established, within a historical backdrop where the subject comes to believe said acts or relations are normal ("natural). For example, race is not scrutinized but persistently accepted as a biological fact.^{iv} The constant repetition of collective acts causes identifiers to lose their semblance of contingency, thereby sedimenting norms around a single topic to form a discourse; however, these discourses are the effect, not the cause, of repetition: "For discourse to materialize a set of *effects*, 'discourse' itself must be understood as complex and convergent chains in which 'effects' are vectors of power" (ibid., 139). Moya Lloyd (2007) further elucidates that these "historical" discourses acquire and retain their "force" or "effectiveness" in concrete ways "from the fact that conventions that underpin them have accreted over time" (63). In this way, current repetition constructs identity by means of sedimented norms,

meaning the “*stabilization of identity is a social process of repetitive inheritance—it is its performance*” (Faber 2011, 17). These Foucauldian-rooted discourses—in that they are constructed meaningfully through forces and counterforces—are a sanctioned method by which the subject acts according to its “historical background (Salih 2002, 47). Thus, the subject is an accumulation of acts referencing discourses put in place historically to shape the subject’s future existence.

Yet if identities and discourses (nexuses of power relations) are grounded in past repetition, but their “being” is established performatively through current acts, there always persists an inability to purely reenact the prior act, as that act is also a repetition and not a positive identifier (source): “That deferral is the repeated act by which legitimation occurs. The pointing to a ground which is never recovered becomes authority’s groundless ground” (Butler 2011, 71). Sedimented repetition defers, or retains the meaning of, previously employed norms by recalling them so that they can be applied in the future; Butler explains, “The future of the signifier of identity can only be secured through a repetition that fails to repeat loyally, a reciting of the signifier that must commit a disloyalty against identity—a catachresis—in order to secure its future” (ibid., 167). While the subject may intend to repeat acts reverently, deferment works through historical contexts by way of combination, subversion, expansion or reduction that opens pathways for a catachresis, which is an improper repetition.^v Through deferment, discourses function as social backdrops, what Butler calls the “grid of intelligibility,” wherein the subject, using these discourses or “particular schemas (including power)” as references for meaning, employ them in current situations to understand and act in line with “the social order” (Lloyd 2007, 34). The grid(s) of intelligibility enable the subject to make sense of everyday circumstances, often unconsciously, such as how men in most societies know not to wear dresses since it would put their masculinity in question; this is performed unconsciously through an acquired grid of sexuality.

Nonetheless, Lidia Puigvert (2003) argues that this blocks feminists and other minority groups from finding a “valuable platform” to unite behind (103), and Elizabeth Grosz (1994) criticizes Butler’s differential understanding of identity as it boils down culture and the subject to a non-material, purely signified basis, removing nature from the formula completely (21); Christopher Peterson (2006) further accuses Butler of never considering a reversal of the culture/nature dichotomy such that nature wholly engulfs culture (164). Certainly, matter being nothing but “*a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter,*” i.e., matter is simply signification via sedimentation, has been the apex of controversy for Butler. However, Peterson misreads Butler’s attack on the discourse (culture)/matter (nature) binary, which she argues does not exist but is a social construction (Butler 2011, xviii). Salih interprets Butler not as denying brute matter’s existence but declaring it is always signified for us *through language* (2002, 80). The subject is not embodied such that it has access to pure perception; instead, “matter” comes to it as always already conceptualized in some way or another, i.e., the subject can never know materiality-in-itself.^{vi} This pertains to Grosz’s criticism as well. “Chromosomes,” “pheromones” and “DNA” can exist, but they are conceptualized within a *contingent* grid of intelligibility and have relations with other objects/discourses by which it is oriented and presented to the subject. From this, significant implications for identity present themselves, such as any identifier (e.g., “women”) will always be exclusive in some way^{vii} since they are not positive but differential i.e., a constituted outside is always present.

Thus far, an analysis of Butler’s core theory of performativity has been laid out. The subject is interpellated into existence in order to make it socially intelligible. Consider a clothing store: clothes are separated by sex. One’s interpellation, e.g., a masculine man (sports wear) or a business woman (women’s business attire), define where one is situated in the store. Yet, Butler focuses not only on the subject’s acts but also their relationship with agency and

becoming. When an act becomes common, e.g., clothing accepted as business attire, it is inducted as a cultural standard; the conjunction of norms on a topic is a discourse that gives social meaning, enabling sedimented norms to appear as ahistorical. For instance, many would claim the clothing division is due to pragmatics, missing the underlying division accepted as normal.^{viii} In effect, discourse requires that (1) the subject is interpellated into a culture (e.g., woman, Black, Muslim), thereby implicating the subject in a web of social norms, and (2) repetition retains the meaning of norms (e.g., women repeat “feminine” norms; men repeat “masculine” norms) through deferment. In this theory, Butler gives a collective understanding of identity that envelops norms and material into a signifying practice utilizing a temporal dimension and incorporating a contingent psyche (Lin 2012, 191). In the next section, I address criticisms of voluntarism and determinism aimed at Butler’s philosophy; this is followed by a more in-depth analysis of agency and its connections to psychoanalysis.

(3.3) Voluntarism and Determinism: Performing Agency

Butler adopts the strategy behind Foucault’s genealogy by canvassing contingency, but, in doing so, she drastically breaks with his method of historical inquiry and implements a schema of immanent critique “to provoke critical examination of the basic vocabulary of the movement of thought” (Butler 2010, vii). While Butler is not interested in giving a history of the subject, Lloyd (2007) emphasizes that she does show how the subject is “deeply implicated in power relations” (26).^{ix} One means through which this is achieved is an intensification of deconstruction and an eschewing of historicity. Butler’s keen performance of immanent critiques mirrors Jacques Derrida more than Foucault, with her focus centering on the facilitation of binaries. Binaries, e.g., nature/culture or determinism/voluntarism, do not exist naturally; they are constructed through different power relations and social circumstances that are not essential but contingent (Weedon 1999, 105). Be that as it may, the ultimate difference

between Foucault and Butler is that the prior uncovers the subject's historical situatedness and the role of power relations in this process, whereas the latter seeks to understand how the subject is able to be formed and exist in a society through a process ontology:

What this analysis does suggest is that an economy of difference is in order in which the matrices, the crossroads at which various identifications are formed and displaced, force a reworking of that logic of non-contradiction by which one identification is always and only purchased at the expense of another. (Butler 2011, 79)

This system of difference, working under a dual process, is the basis for Butlerian agency: the subject, interpellated by and into social norms and “matrices” of power, *must* repeat norms, willingly or unwillingly, to retain social intelligibility.^x

It is here that Butler goes beyond Foucault's “Analytics of Power” to discuss fundamental elements of power, such as inherent division and exclusionary tactics. Nevertheless, the subjected/subjecting argument has led many to accuse Butler of voluntarism (Waters 1996; Moi 2005) *and* determinism (Puigvert 2003; Zack 2005). In reality, Butler desires to dissolve this binary, and there has been no lack of skeptical feminists to question the plausibility of such an approach. Shiela Jeffreys (1996) believes Butlerian performativity is a type of voluntarism that allows the subject to exchange its identity at will, while Seyla Benhabib (1995) contests that without recourse to autonomy, agency and selfhood, Butler leaves women defenseless in patriarchic institutions and, upon rejecting these, she falls into a deterministic bind.

Regarding voluntarism, Butler's ideas correspond well with the political philosopher Ernesto Laclau, who writes, “The subject who takes the decision is only *partially* a subject; he is also a background of sedimented practices organizing a normative framework which operates as a limitation on the horizon of options” (Laclau 2000a, 83).^{xi} In line with this, Butlerian citationality, or the referencing of social norms to justify acts, understands actions not as accidental occurrences but an accretion of the past and future sutured into the present: “[The

norm] is ‘cited’ as such a norm [sedimentation], but it also derives its power through the citation that it compels” (Butler 2011, xxii). Butler gives the example of a judge who, though not creating the law, “cites” the rules within it; the judge himself *has* no “power” but exercises the power allotted to him: “It is precisely through the infinite deferral of authority to an irrecoverable past that authority is constituted. That deferral is the repeated act by which legitimation occurs” (ibid., 70-71).^{xii} The judge must cite the law to enforce it, but the law, without the judge, ceases to exist or function. Therefore, and in line with Butler’s argument of repetition, no norm is set in stone but due to the process of becoming—Butler’s process ontology—the subject and the norms that regulate it are prolonged through repetition and deferral yet have no pre-given nature to determine them absolutely or finally. At the same time, the citing of these sedimented norms “compels” them into future circumstances: “The subordination of the citation to its (infinitely deferred) origin is thus a ruse, a dissimulation whereby the prior authority proves to be *derived from* the contemporary instance of its citation” (ibid., 71). Norms are therefore never finalized; they depend on their citational repetition, or what Butler calls “the accumulating and dissimulating historicity of force” (ibid., 172). This implies that citationality is not ahistorical, as it requires context for its existence—without context, there would be no citation.

Many have argued that the subject has the capacity *not* to cite norms, and that certainly is true, yet Butler’s argument is that certain social forces work through citationality. The refusal to cite norms is not a musing activism but includes real, corporeal effects: “Femininity is thus not the product of a choice, but a forcible citation of a norm, one whose complex historicity is indissociable from relations of discipline, regulation, punishment” (ibid., 177). This is one of the prime reasons Butler focuses so heavily on the body, which is not just a bias towards Cartesian dualism, nor a means to dissolve voluntarism, nor even to explain bodily historical impositions. Linguistic signification—Lloyd defines signification as “the process that establishes the terms of intelligibility or

meaning. Signification is thus a practice” (2007, 54)—has effects reverberating through the life of the subject in any given context; identifiers are not chosen at will, but often forced upon the subject, e.g., gender and race. This has the same function of “field of possibilities” in Foucault’s writing: while the subject has the ability to not follow or misappropriate a norm, it is also limited by what is present in the cultural well of meaning. It may seem condescending to reduce the inability of Saudi Arabian women to drive to language, but this underestimates signification rather than vice versa (Lin 2012, 189).^{xiii}

Sedimentation is the creation, or semblance, of “matter” due to the intensification of repetition and deferral referencing these calcified norms in citationality, which gives rise to a Law (discourse) regulating repetition, or, in other words, appropriate (acceptable) and inappropriate (unacceptable) acts.^{xiv} According to Lacan, society is established when interpersonal relationships construct social norms to form a universally posited Law; resistance to the Law by any particular subject simply reconstitutes it as the universal (e.g., without the convict, there is no Law) (Kirby 1997, 118). Butler’s judge similarly demonstrates that the Law exists only in relation to the subjects existing within it. What separates Lacan and Butler is that the former always bars the particular from the universal, whereas the latter argues the bar is an effect, not a cause, of the Law: “Recontextualizing the law—prohibition, in this case—occasions a reversal in which the sexuality prohibited becomes the sexuality produced” (Butler 1997a, 49). On the other hand, both argue the subject is constituted through foreclosure, which is a prohibition where the subject is barred from something (e.g., the barring of homosexuality evolves into hypermasculinity), yet Butler grants subversion—unintentional and/or unintended repetitions. As the Law is not essential to human existence but “emerge[s] as a symptom” of performativity, room is left for inappropriate repetition (Butler 2011, 49).

Citatoriality may limit the subject to constricted ways of existence (e.g., punishment, coercion, emotions), but it also provides a basis to subvert norms through its own ground in a ceaseless deferral.

Critiques of determinism, such as Benhabib's, are linked to Enlightenment ideals (sovereign autonomy of identity/choices), which have been seen as the bulwark of arguments for responsibility. However, the Butlerian subject is neither self-sufficient nor sovereign, being intersubjectively constituted and depending on collectivist systems to obtain and maintain its identity (Connolly 1991, 175). Butler spends a good part of *Excitable Speech* emphasizing this through the subject's speech: once it has left the mouth, it is out of the speaker's control and open to (mis)interpretation. Furthermore, as Lloyd notes, "The possibility of naming is always dependent upon one's own prior naming, [and] this compromises the idea of a subject independent of language" (2007, 118). For example, I can label an individual a criminal, but this would have no effect—I lack the authority; in contrast, if a judge labels them a criminal, there are mechanisms to ensure this identity sticks. In this respect, agency is neither sovereign nor autonomous; it needs social norms, power relations, other subjects and a Law. Nevertheless, Butler's repetition provides grounds for resistance: "The subject is not *determined* by the rules through which it is generated because signification is *not a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition*" (Butler 2010, 198). The subject *must* repeat acts by citing sedimented networks of power relations, but the meaning of the act is always deferred in such a way that misappropriation of the Law becomes possible in an event Butler calls subversive repetition.

Like Foucault, Butler contends a multiplicity of discourses work through networks of power relations to form hegemonic forces.^{xv} Subversive repetition paves the way for a descriptive understanding of repetitive acts operating through networks as appropriate or inappropriate by constricted, non-sovereign agents (Butler 1997a, 16). An appropriate repetition would be an act that is socially

acceptable (e.g., a man repeats masculine acts); an inappropriate one is socially unacceptable (e.g., a man repeats effeminate acts), thereby deeming the prior intelligible and the latter unintelligible. Inappropriate acts could therefore result in unwanted consequences, e.g., discipline, exclusion or social/actual death. When conjoined with Lacan, a multiplicity of Laws emerges not as universals but hegemonies that can be transformed through *mis*-repetitions *within* discourse: a man *appearing* to be a woman acts effeminately. Thus, Butler adopts Lacan's understanding of regulation but implements Foucauldian multiplicity (Butler 2011, 135) and inherent resistance (i.e., resistance is interior to discourse) (Weedon, 1999, 123).^{xvi} The subject can only perform acts available to it within a system of power, whether those be appropriate or inappropriate; the interpretation of those acts are social rather than individual. Butler's Law, which is plural and not singular, *must*, one could argue, be morphed through inconsistent repetition/citation due to Foucauldian power and the infinite deferral of meaning, escaping determinism through a non-sovereign subject.

As with Foucault, the Butlerian subject (the reiterated "I") turns out not to be a prediscursive subject, but its substantial *appearance* is the result of sedimented norms. Instead, a non-sovereign subject is "born" via interpellation: "There is no subject prior to its constructions, and neither is the subject determined by those constructions" (Butler 2011, 84). The subject becomes only "a name we are compelled to use to describe a key feature in a process, something that the noun-form rebels against, at least until it can be persuaded to release the presumption of metaphysical substance from its grip," and not an accumulation of innate faculties or ethics (Butler 2012, 6). The subject is therein an *action*, a verb disguised as a noun, which is the effect, not cause, of culture: "There need not be a 'doer behind the deed,' but that the 'doer' is variably constructed in and through the deed" (Butler 2010, 195). This account of subjection as the genesis of the subject, however, has not been easy for many to accept.^{xvii}

While many of the criticisms directed towards a constructed subject have been dealt with elsewhere (see note xvii), the most appropriate one is presented by Lois McNay (2000), which accuses Butlerian constructivism of having no “historical depth” and, therefore, cannot explain the “durability” of a unified identity (79). On the one hand, Butler’s turn to psychoanalysis accredits the grid of intelligibility through which the subject comes to understand its world. However, Butler’s argument of the psyche—which is not even a substantial mental entity but a process of becoming—is a somewhat complex argument:

Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence of identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality. This also suggests that if the reality is fabricated as an interior essence [a psyche], that very interiority is an effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse, the public regulation of fantasy through the surface politics of the body, the gender border control that differentiates inner from outer, and so institutes the ‘integrity’ of the subject. (Butler 2010, 185)

The first premise is granted through performativity, namely essences are the *effect* of repetition citing sedimented norms. The essence of identifiers is an effect of the performative subject that is both its own the grounding and existence. However, this is not a materialism of the thing-in-itself that is signified, which she believes is Foucault’s mistake.^{xviii} Material is *created* psychically—the psyche—which is also the result of interpellation and process ontology. Consequently, the psyche is the source not only of what philosophy traditionally viewed as the “faculties” of the subject but also signification itself, which includes materiality. The binary between interior and exterior for Butler is merely an effect of sedimentation.

On another level, Butler at times submits to McNay’s criticism of lacking the contextualizing potency theorists like Foucault provide; Butler often limits her theories to disciplinary power (ibid., 184-85), but leaves discussions of other forms of power somewhat unaddressed or read through other philosophers.^{xix} A disciplinary-heavy or abstract discussion of norms, with an inability to return to

the concrete, prevents her, on many occasions, from differentiating between normalization and Foucauldian normality (discussed in the previous chapter). When Butler discusses Foucault's "regulatory practice" or "productive power," she dissolves the contingency and equates this with her understanding of repetition and citationality inherent to identity formation, whereas Foucault sought to scrutinize historical practices that had sedimented (Butler 2011, xiii). Laclau accuses Butler of ignoring the power of ideas, equating "abstract" with ahistoricity on two accounts. First, Butler "lacks any principle of structuration," which is solvable by Foucault's historical *a priori*; while she can certainly account for how the subject is constructed via a unified psyche, she has difficulty addressing how networks of power relations, especially *forms* of power such as biopower and governmentality, structure and propel themselves. For this, she needs a theory not just of the subject but a better grasp on structures of power. Second, she does not consider "the possibility that abstraction itself is concretely produced," something Foucault was keen to discuss in varying schools of thought, e.g., the Enlightenment and Marxism (2000b, 187).^{xx} Abstract ideas are rarely limited to the abstract, and they frequently build themselves from a dispersal of concrete (albeit signified) situations that Butler can, at times, boil down to "Language." For example, Marxism only makes sense in a social system that gradually shifted from the divine hierarchy of social status to the material-scientific apprehension of the world in which material could be exploited by anyone for capitalistic gains.

Up to now, Foucault's constructivism has emphasized the contextualization of effective analysis and, on the other hand, Lacanian psychoanalysis has been deployed to understand the subject's formation. However, this has been a troublesome intertwining^{xxi} for such thinkers as Kirby (2006) who questions the weaving of these strategies; her argument is that Butler's philosophy seems quite detrimental to one Foucauldian inheritance: productive power. When shifted to a psychoanalytic framework, production is

captured “by an enduring and overriding commitment to power’s juridical identity and repressive ‘psychology,’” most notable in Butler’s writings on psychoanalytic foreclosure, i.e., the “barring” of an identifier from the psyche such that it produces an effect (Kirby 2006, 46). Butler’s reading of foreclosure veers away from Lacan’s more social psychoanalysis to reject foreclosure as “secondarily social,” as Lacan does, and to attribute an essentialist understanding of foreclosure as a necessary way “social prohibitions work” (Butler 2000a, 149). As Butler only allows subversive potentiality from within power relations, foreclosures “do not merely prohibit objects once they appear, but they constrain in advance the kind of objects that can and do appear within the horizon of desire” (Butler *ibid.*, 149). This undermines the Butlerian logic of causality, such that foreclosure is the *cause* rather than *effect*; if this is the case—where productive power is the foreclosure implemented in interpellation—then productivity would be a cause as well as a misreading of Foucault. While Foucault acknowledged foreclosure as a means of power (Foucault 1980b, 210), this was contingent and thus the *result* of power; in contrast, Butler habitually puts Foucault on the backburner and overtly embraces aspects of psychoanalytic fundamentalism. Pheng Cheah (1996) criticizes this appropriation of Foucault because it “does not explain the *causality* of social-historical forms in producing the materiality of bodies” in the way Foucault’s system does (113). Without this Foucauldian backbone, Butler is left with an intensifying problem of how psychoanalytic structures can be inherent to subjectivity and agency.

Nevertheless, if one brackets these criticisms for the time being (addressed in the next chapter), there persists the attack that the subject, understood as pure discursivity (production), is encapsulated entirely in language. Traditional autonomy may come to this conclusion, but Butler’s Foucauldian psychoanalysis moves beyond it by asserting contestable and subvertible Laws. Though a subject may be constructed through discourse, Connolly argues, “I am not entirely captured by it, even though it is stamped upon me—and even though

it enables me” (1991, 120). Agency is not possible *because of* discourse but is an essential facet *intrinsic to* the existence of discourse, an inherent constituency in that the subject produces discourse and the discourse produces the subject, historically and in the present: “There is no agency *of* language [Butler denies the sovereignty of discourse], and agency is not denied *by* language [the subject constructs discourse]; agency is *in* language [the potential to act appropriately and inappropriately]” (Chambers and Carver 2008, 88). The subject’s own constitution facilitates it to act towards both subversion and further sedimentation, such that, “There is only a taking up of the tools where they lie, where the very ‘taking up’ is enabled by the tools lying there” (Butler 2010, 199). There is no production of tools—at least not spontaneously (*ex nihilo*)—but there is a variety of ways, acceptable and unacceptable, in which the subject may use them.

Perhaps Butler’s largest contribution to a Foucauldian paradigm though—outside of a contingent psyche—is that power becomes incorporated into a process ontology. Materialization, for example, is not solely an effect of power, but it is one of its vectors of exertion. If materialization is in fact a verb (active), then power is in perpetual motion, or rather power is itself motion perpetuating itself into future circumstances and resisting finalization (Wyk 2012, 91). Butler’s process ontology demonstrates a discursive subject bypassing the dilemmas of voluntarism and determinism to such an extent that it begins dissolving the binary; this is not to say it annihilates the dichotomy, but it problematizes the boundaries enough that they begin to seep into one another: “When the object acts on us, it does not monopolize the activity: it solicits us, sparks our action. So where does the action begin, and where does it end?” (Butler 2012, 7). Still, Butler must reconcile her performativity with a stronger Foucauldian vein to explain the psychoanalytic stances she takes.^{xxii} The objective becomes to find a bridge between Lacanian psychoanalysis and Foucauldian constructivism, a synthesis supported by theorists such as Ali

Rattansi (1995) who claims this strategy could help the analysis of identifiers such as race, viewing racism(s) as plural and functioning differently across cultures and epochs (272-73). While she solves many of Foucault's dilemmas with a psyche and the constitution of the subject, she fails to limit her use of psychoanalysis and either reel it back or implant it in a stronger Foucauldian context.

(3.4) Regulating Identity: Abjection and Passionate Attachments

While Foucault demonstrates shortcomings in Butler's theory, his antisubjectivist undertones make subject-cohesion and -durability a central problem. Butler's process ontology touts a fixable explanation as to why identity appears stagnant and why altercating identity is not easily implementable. The Butlerian psyche is not some empty vessel that becomes inscribed by power; it is actually constructed and regulated by power through a system of difference. Interjecting Derridean difference into psychoanalysis, Butler is able to transform Julia Kristeva's (1982) notion of "abjection" to illuminate how the subject comes to discursively constitute itself. Abjection works through exclusion to ensure that someone or something is denied acceptance into a hegemony or universal. Lloyd defines abjection as such: "The process whereby certain persons are excluded from particular normative ideals of subjecthood" (2007, 74). Since Laws are only capable of establishing a regulatory basis "by barring from cultural intelligibility—and rendering culturally abject—cultural organizations of sexuality that exceed the structuring purview of the law," the subject must abject, i.e., repudiate, characteristics linking it to adverse identities (Butler 2011, 142).

The classic example is the homosexual excluded from social intelligibility in various ways (e.g., medical inquiry, confinement, harassment, death), but Butlerian abjection is more fundamental, for instance, a "hardworking" person must abject attributes of "laziness." The repetition of abjection, or socialization,

sediments the subject's desire and constitutes identity, whereby the social "region of abjected identifications" is construed as the "constituted outside," the inherent exclusion involved in a differential system (Butler 2011, 74): "The subject is constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all, 'inside' the subject as its own founding repudiation" (ibid., xiii). One can see this in the current refugee crisis in Europe by which "Islam" has become the abjection of Western Judeo-Christian values. It is through the "abjected outside" that the subject is regulated within social norms and gains/retains its intelligibility in its social surrounding.

Butler's lack of sovereign autonomy becomes beneficial through abjection as, on the one hand, it opens up a space that "threaten[s] to expose the self-grounding presumptions of the sexed subject"; on the other hand, the subject exists within "a repudiation whose consequences it cannot fully control," which has subversive potential (ibid., xiii).^{xxiii} This is not to say abjection always ends in welcoming consequences, something women have discovered through millenniums of oppression, with Iris Young (2005) declaring, "Culture has projected onto [women] identification with the abjected body" (81). McNay has criticized the notion of a repudiation-grounded identity by arguing that it diminishes the process of subjectification too much in that (1) constraint restricts the ability to discern how the subject is truly formed, and (2) constraint uses abstract identifiers transcending contextual circumstances (2000, 3-4). Joan Scott's (1999) book *Gender and the Politics of History* excellently counters (1) by demonstrating that the repudiation of identifiers does not synchronously mean it is exercised unilaterally: difference has been used in terms of refusing rights and to control "Others" who "might have a fundamentally different historical experience" as well as to use it by "disqualifying for equal treatment those different from the universal figure" (183). However, Butler has an unfortunate habit of decontextualizing performative phenomenon, such as self-reflexivity or

internalization, which makes (2) more difficult to overcome; the instances given here (self-reflexivity and internalization) are seen by Butler as psychoanalytic universals that occur in all subjects, but by idealizing these, she ignores the fact that they do not occur in the same way or on the same level within every subject, which also ignores the complexity of these events. By means of this argument, she excludes a great deal of subjects from the pragmatic potential she offers (e.g., Black women of Black gays and lesbians, discussed in chapter five).

Even if an enhanced abjection displays complex formations of subjectivity supplemented by Foucauldian philosophy, why not reject abjection itself so as to free up identity (freedom)? In order to come into a culture, the subject must be socialized, and this necessitates abjection since socialization is the result of differences. This socialization therefore requires the acceptance of sets of norms or discourses one may not wholly agree with or be mentally capable of agreeing (infants). This acceptance of norms brings the subject into a social ontology, and retaining its existence depends on what Butler calls “passionate attachments”: “There is no way to protect against the primary vulnerability and susceptibility of the call of recognition that solicits existence, to that primary dependency on a language we never made in order to acquire a tentative ontological status” (Butler 1997a, 26).^{xxiv} Interpellation not only “hails” the subject into existence, but it also sets up the psyche through abjection and a necessary attachment to the limits laid out by cultural inclusion.

Passionate attachments return to Althusser’s interpellative policeman and his “hailing” of the citizen. While the citizen needs the policeman to interpellate them into existence, there would not “be a turning around without some readiness to turn” (Butler 1997b, 107).^{xxv} Although the Law *appears* to force the subject into being (especially children, ethnic minorities and women), it actually *compels* it through the promise of an ontological constitution; the necessary constitution *is* the “primary vulnerability” of subjectivity: “For the ‘I’ to launch its critique, it must first understand the ‘I’ itself is dependent upon its complicitous desire for

the law to make possible its own existence” (ibid., 108). In other words, the subject requires the Law(s) for existence, for without socialization the subject remains unintelligible or incomprehensible: intersex children who induce a “medical” crisis wherein their “sex” must be morphed into the standing scientific paradigm (Butler 2004c). The subject’s own voice is built upon the Law(s), so even criticism launched against it implies a prior interpellation. This compelling becomes a Nietzschean “turning-back” upon oneself, the constitutive interpellation that not only submits the subject to networks of power but, through the institution of the psyche, *is* self-reflexivity (2011, 109). The result is a self-relation (passionate attachment) whereby becoming a subject, both initially and continually, necessitates subjection for the subject to arise.

Abjection and passionate attachments are not simply two phenomena that occur in subjectivity; it is a relationship working through one another to project each other. However, the lacking contextualism haunts abjection and passionate attachments, and the result is a system that cannot competently address what Wendy Brown (1995) terms “the implications of the particular genealogy and production of conditions of identity’s desire for recognition” that are essential for a practical methodology (62). Butler’s focus certainly is not historical, but she leaves little room for the augmentation of historicity into her theory, at times amassing barriers due to her psychoanalytic heritage (e.g., self-reflexivity, foreclosure). This critique has plagued Butler’s project from the beginning, but it is not an aporia that should lead to a dismissal of Butler’s insights; these problems are solvable by a (re)turn to Foucault.

(3.5) Conclusions: Becoming Beyond Butler

By tying a constructivism grounded in power relations and discourses to a psychoanalytic subjectivity embedded in the formation of the subject’s psyche, Butler conceives a process ontology by which the constitution of the subject through interpellation is repeated, endlessly, by the citation of regulatory

(materialized) norms. The incorporation of these theories of identity and power into a system of difference whose existence definitively puts forward a constitutive outside projects a relay of abjection and passionate attachments in connection with the temporal durability of the subject. Performativity lays out this repetitive process of identity by comingling the past, present and future, enabling a temporal comprehension of the subject. However, Butler's process ontology does not sail through the landscape of identity politics unfettered. One instance of this is her subversive repetition that often fails to live up to its potential, such that Black women have still been unable to detach their identities from hypersexuality. Thus, is the subversion of norms enough to eradicate oppression (Jeffreys 1996; Kirby 2006)? Butler says not always (2011, 176), but what are the limits? When is subversive repetition deemed to be successful, viable or even worthwhile and when is it deemed hopeless? Unlike Foucault, she does not offer a strong basis of strategizing in that the fact that contingency is present is defended but *how* it is contingent soars under the radar for the most part. Why have homosexuals subversive tactics worked to redefine marriage in countries such as England and the U.S. while other minorities, e.g., Native Americans in the U.S. and Canada or aborigines in Australia, have been unable to shift the scales in their favor?

Of equal importance, how does she cope with *dispositifs* employed through matrices of power? While power is discussed at length in Butler, the mechanisms through which it works are typically over-generalized (gender/sex) or discarded (she rarely discusses economic well-being). Without such an analysis, can a Butlerian paradigm be seen as feasible if it lacks any account of potential directions to move? How effective is repetition against *dispositifs* built into, in fact constructing, discourses? Considering self-reflexivity, is the subject's "turning back" upon itself ahistorical, or is it a *dispositif* as well? If the subject's internalization varies historically, how much of a foundation can be found in performativity? If they are drastically distinct for lower-income, urbanized

minorities in contrast to upper-class, suburbanized majorities, this certainly would call for different means of repetition and strategies. Lloyd also levels a criticism at Butler's lack of historicity: "[Butler] concentrates too much, that is, on the *general* conditions of possibility for resignifications and not enough on the specific *historical* circumstances within which *particular* resignifications emerge" (2007, 125). This highlights Butler's under-emphasis on Foucauldian forms of power, often viewing power as a substantial phenomenon instead of a dispersal of power structures (e.g., sovereign power, biopower, pastoral power)—although she does cling tightly to disciplinary power, perhaps to a fault. Along with this, Butler acknowledges the multiplicity of discourses, but consistently discusses the psyche as if it were a unity (1997b, 193-94); this is visible in her portrayal of foreclosure, which encompasses the entirety of the psyche; this often is put in tension with the dispersion/division of hegemonic sedimentations (Bordo 2003). Could this be a strategy of imposing a psychic typology on those who have had historically different experiences, ones that shape who the subject is and how it interacts with its world? For example, Young writes, "If the chest is the center of a person's sense of being-in-the-world and identity, men and women have quite different experiences of being in the world" (I. Young 2005, 76). Consequently, if discourses are diverse, could not the same be said of the "I," the psyche? In other words, if the subject enters an ontological frame through a reiterated constitution, must it come into existence as a "whole"? What about homosexual ethnic minorities who face a split between their sexuality and their race? Can one talk about the "wholeness" of their "I," or is it split up and conflicted from within the psyche, as Foucault argues? In the following chapter, I elaborate on the reasons why Butler, in order to answer these questions, needs a (re)turn to Foucault, but in doing so work on a synthesis between these two systems.

CHAPTER 4

FINDING A MIDDLE GROUND: CONTEXTUALIZING THE PSYCHE

(4.1) Introduction

With deficiencies and leverage points laid out for both parties, it is noticeable that Foucault and Butler overlap in many respects, primarily in the context of the subject and power. Foucault's cognizance of power, *dispositifs* and genealogy fruitfully render a methodology capable of picking out themes, historically implemented, that influence the way we think, act and speak. At the same time, he fails to subsume this under a psychic proposal that would unify the diverse components of his work, resulting in a vagueness that lends itself to readings of voluntarism and determinism. Butler atones for these pitfalls with a process ontology that works through a performative subject projecting and maintaining power relations through citational repetition of sedimented norms to defer their meaning into the future. Simultaneously, she recoils from Foucault's historical astuteness, which has led to difficulties in handling specific situations in their historical context. In this chapter, I synthesize the differences between these two philosophers to show how their reconciliation gives way to a stronger, more pragmatic theory of the subject, power relations and subversive strategies. The first section concerns how Butler insulates Foucault's work, while the second section goes on to rethink Butler's own conclusions and makes room for a Foucauldian projection onto her process ontology. In doing so, I set up the fifth chapter wherein I discuss the repercussions of such a synthesis and how it brings

about a new method for analyzing violence, both social and physical, by incorporating the goals Butler and Foucault set out in their own work respectively.

(4.2) Constructing the Psyche: Instituting a Foucauldian Psyche

The most troublesome dimension Foucault has run into thus far has been subject-durability, for which he does not provide a strong argument and, at times, appears to reject. Combined with his discussions of materiality as “inscribed” onto the body without explaining the means of inscription through psychic mechanisms (1995; 2003a), one begins to wonder how he can escape arguments of pure materialism if he provides no psychic capacity to compound these identifiers. Ladelle McWhorter (2003) argues that this is a strategy to evade any unitary understanding of ontology, potentially going “so far as to debunk and dismantle subjectivity altogether,” but it has consequently caused, at minimum, confusion if not the inability to explain the subject’s existence and (self-)experience (110-11). If the “mentality” of the subject is imposed onto the body, what maintains this materiality over time? Moreover, is this mentality a material inscription as well? Butler accommodates this subjectivist skepticism by presenting a theory of the psyche that rests not on Freudian drives or innate faculties but is constructed through a performative process ontology. Moreover, a reconciliation of Foucauldian power and genealogy allows this synthesis to retain the key aspects of Foucault’s own thought, insulating them in many respects, to establish the subject, sedimentation and durability as feasible options. This revolves around projecting a Foucauldian structure onto the Butlerian psyche, which can be achieved through Butler’s grounding of ontology in performativity.

For starters, identity is sedimented through a process whereby the subject must *cite* social norms to perform socially acceptable, intelligible acts, and the repetition of these norms further sediments them which in turn motivates further subjective citation of the norms to maintain passionate attachments and abjection;

it is the performative illusion of prediscursivity caused by citational repetition that gives identifiers their ontological grounding, such that an identifier (material) “has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality” (Butler 2010, 185). Since there is no intrinsically meaningful existence (i.e., no meaning without performance), material and identities rely on the *repetition* of norms to maintain the illusion, with Nadine Ehlers (2008) exemplifying the case of race that reinforces racially constructed “truths” that, “without possessing ontological grounding,” are only manifested “in the re-telling” of racial norms (334). Patricia Moynihan (1997) notes that Foucault exhibits norms ritualistically in his earliest work by accentuating “processes, not content,” by which the interaction and friction of social (“power”) relations “construct a context of judgment” (206). However, in rejecting the presumption of innate qualities or faculties without inquiry, Foucault also excluded any structural—or procedural—understanding of subjective interiority, i.e., a psyche combining norms into a cultural paradigm. Adversely, Butler invests her energies into explaining the interiority of a psyche that is founded on a regulation, via performance, which constructs the psyche: “If the reality is fabricated as an interior essence, that very interiority is an effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse” (Butler 2010, 185).¹ This allows power relations to amalgamate into sedimented discourses while explaining the temporal durability of the subject’s reality in an interior, albeit not inherent, psyche. Fragments of a process ontology may be present in Foucault’s work (2003f; 1990), but it is in the writings of Butler that they are expanded upon to make a fully-grounded theory.

The Butlerian psyche stretches beyond the debate of subject-durability as well, building upon Foucauldian power in such a way that the mechanisms, or “tools” in Butlerian parlance, which constitute the subject, such as repetition, abjection and passionate attachments, likewise constitute power; consequently, power is dependent upon temporality. Emiliano Sacchi (2011), drawing from Gilles Deleuze’s book on Foucault, concludes that, for Foucault, what the subject

is, its “reality,” is always what the subject is becoming, or “becoming-other,” i.e., a future self (391). This means that the subject as well as power are not entities but *practices* and *processes* such that discourses do not function as a set of rules and sayings; rather, they are “a discursive *practice* embedded in institutional networks of power and authority” (Best 2005, 109). According to Butler, the future of an identifier (e.g., man) relies on its current citation and repetition (e.g., masculinity) to ensure its future existence that is never guaranteed (2011, 68). She writes, “Identification is constantly figured as a desired event or accomplishment, but one which finally is never achieved” (2011, 68). Identification derives from sedimentation, yet this sedimentation only remains a social force if it is repeated, performatively, by the subject. In this theory, signification breaks from a stagnant nominalism into a mobile practice that not only coerces but necessitates the repetitious action of the subject to maintain its own existence; consequently, “Signification is...*a regulated process of repetition*” (Butler 2010, 198).ⁱⁱ Foucault caught onto this point in his formulation of power (relations), which is the ceaseless movement of social forces: “[Power] is the moving substrate of force relations” (1990, 93). Within the confines of Butler’s process ontology, it is these concatenations of force relations that both *are* the power and the limits of the subject: “Power is the name that one attributes to this complexity [of force relations]” (Butler 1997, 35). Moreover, the cohesion between the subject and power is consequently a temporality depending both on past circumstances and an uninsured future by a performance enacted in the present. What makes this reworking more appealing is that Butler reiterates many of the key components of Foucault’s thought in much the same way, retaining the philosophical strength of the tools these two thinkers provide.

Another point of agreement between Butler and Foucault is that there is no prediscursive subject (Holmes 1997; Ransom 1997; Kelly 2009; Lloyd 2005), but this is a strained agreement. Foucault argues the subject is brought about through power relations (e.g., Man [2002], beast [2003], individual [1995],

population [2007]); Butler critically enunciates the weaknesses involved in this psyche-less theory (over-subordination [1997b] or over-materialization [2004a]). With this in mind, Butler psychically interprets Foucauldian power to explain subject-constitution: “[The subject] is always the nexus, the non-space of cultural collision, in which the demand to resignify or repeat the very terms which constitute the ‘we’ cannot be summarily refused, but neither can they be followed in strict obedience” (2011, 84). As a result, the subject ceases to be viewed as an “object” or “entity” and is replaced by a synthesizing psyche, an activity, constructing reality through a temporal lens. Additionally, if power is nonautonomous, i.e., cannot be owned by any subject (Butler 1995, 1997a; Foucault 1990, 1980b), the exertion of power relies on something else, i.e., the place or position of the subject within a social structure.ⁱⁱⁱ Explained by Ellen Feder (2011), the subject is able to exercise power due to “different positions individuals take up or are assigned [which] afford specific arenas for the exercise of power”; she gives the example of a parent who, by the mere fact of being a parent, is able to perform certain actions “supported by society and by law” (59). However, this does not imply determinism (chapter three); instead, the subject is both acted upon and an actor, i.e., “Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (Foucault 2003b, 36). Foucault elaborates on this through the conception of *dispositifs*, which act as regulators of identifiers (both enabling and restricting).

Since Butler’s psyche exists within a sedimented reality, restrictions and capabilities are put into place through power; however, how power works along a unified axis, cohesively, for designated topics (e.g., sexuality, race, nationality) remains somewhat unaddressed (except in her discussions of discourse). The psyche explains “matter” and why certain features are taken to be innate, but when it comes to *dispositifs* and their historical instantiation of identifiers, Butler falls short. However, she simultaneously offers a narrative for the regulation of *dispositifs* via the psyche, stating her intentions as follows: “To what extent do

regulatory practices of gender formation and division constitute identity, the internal coherence of the subject, indeed, the self-identical status of the person?” (2010, 23). In this way, her philosophy elaborates the structuring, durability and establishment of “materialization” that allows the subject to be intelligible; in contrast, it is found to be lacking the genealogy Foucault provides with inquisitive analyses of *dispositifs* as regulatory mechanisms. Still, there is an agreement between these two philosophers in that “matter” comes to the subject as always-already-signified (Foucault 2003a; Butler 2011), although Foucault’s explanations remain vexatious due to the absence of a psyche (Kirby 2006, 111). Importantly, Butler notes that identifiers are “relational and have a historical meaning-context” (Butler 2010, 155; 2011, x). As Veronica Vasterling (1999) comments, “The body posited as prior to the sign, is always *posited* or *signified* as *prior*” (10-11). Butler’s only structural cohesion for identifiers, however, is discourse, whereas she requires a stronger Foucauldian supplement of *dispositifs* to historically understand strands of discourses that regulate the subject on a homogenous axis.^{iv}

Dispositifs are only regulatory to the extent that they exist within and through power relations, and in Butler’s infrastructure these regulatory mechanisms can be understood as functioning through a process of regulation that is built on the subject’s reiterated acts. Nevertheless, an ambiguity arises for both philosophers. As mentioned before, Butler has difficulties differentiating between “Language” and “Discourse.” At times, Language is seen as an equivalent of discourse to include historical institutions (2011) while at other times it merely denotes speech (1997a).^v This inability to distinguish Language and discourses causes confusion as to whether she takes spatial, architectural and geographical issues into consideration. She claims, “‘Sex’ is a regulatory ideal whose materialization is compelled, and this materialization takes place (or fails to take place) through certain highly regulated practices” (Butler 2011, xii); it is not clear how much of Foucault’s “nondiscursive” practices, which are still

discursive in the sense that they are socially signified, have a place in this understanding of discursive practice. This is of utmost importance because Foucault wishes to distance himself from mere linguistically-signified understandings of power (Foucault 1980b, 2001a) and incorporate “physical” institutions and their affect on the subject, its “body”, which “is broken down by the rhythms of work, rest, and holidays; it is poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws; it constructs resistances” (Foucault 2003a, 360).^{vi} This not only enhances the capacities of genealogical investigations and expands the horizon of analysis, but it also addresses complaints of Butler overlooking these “non-linguistic” practices (McNay 2000; Fraser 2013).

On the other hand, Foucault has difficulty discerning the activity and passivity of the subject. While others, such as Elizabeth Grosz (1994) and Butler (2004a) herself, make this criticism, Lois McNay (2000) gets to the core of the issue: “The lack of detail in Foucault’s consideration of how the dialectic of freedom and constraint is realized in the process of subject formation results, ultimately, in his thought vacillating between the moments of determinism and voluntarism” (9). For Foucault to overcome such ambiguity, a psychic relationship between the subject and power as well as the process of subjectivation is required. Butler brings this out in her essay “Bodies and Power Revisited,” which she presents both as a critical piece on Foucault and an opportunity to build on his groundwork. While I disagree with her interpretation of Foucault promoting a power that inscribes meaning onto bodies (Butler 2004a, 2010),^{vii} the dubiousness and obscurity in Foucault’s writing permits this sort of reading (Foucault 1980a, 1995, 2003a). In Butler’s opinion, the subject—even in its traditionally-portrayed “passivity”—is an *active*, performative subject that enables its own subordination: “These are not two bodies—one subjected, another productive—for the body is also the movement, the passage, between subjection and productivity” (2004a, 187). When conjoined with passionate attachments, the subject is therefore not “shaped”/“made” by power per se, but

power adheres, “attaches,” the subject to identifiers (ibid., 190). By adopting the psyche, Foucault has the capacity to provide a stronger inquiry of *dispositifs* as it is not restricted to a multiplicity of force relations acting upon the subject as a passive atom within a larger socio-historical matrix; the subject is an active participant in the process of constructed ontologies by which reality comes into existence and is maintained. Still, this is not a floating field of possibilities that must be chosen at will but are constricted by the historical “conditions of possibility” or the sedimented context in which the subject lives (Foucault 1983a).

Whether the historical *a priori* or materialization, crediting the current paradigms of norms is an essential asset to process ontology. Butler lays out a process of regulation actively reverberating between subjects by modalities of power relations, whereby, “Just as the subject is derived from conditions of power that precede it, so the psychic operation of the norm is derived...from prior social operations” (1997b, 21). The performative subject, consequently, is influenced by its epoch, but it simultaneously reproduces or alters its conditions, rules and norms actively.^{viii} For both Foucault and Butler, repetition of norms is necessitated for the stability and coherence of the subject, and breaking rules of regulation can have serious consequences (Lloyd 2007; Weedon 1999; Zivi 2008). Repetition exists as “the mechanisms of the cultural reproduction of identities” through which sedimentation retains its socially sanctioned position, but this causes repeated acts to “cite” sedimented social norms to “justify” themselves (Butler 2010, 44).

Citing a social norm, or citationality, implores the reinstatement of an original, yet the original is a social construction as well, only *seemingly* original; the necessity to repeat norms to ensure their future usage (deferral) allows the subversion of social norms to promote new modalities of existence. This overcomes the problem of durability and structure-cohesion that Foucault encounters, for if power is dispersed forms of power relations, conflicted and

tense, coming from all directions, then, as Grosz (1994) notes, “The subject would simply be an aggregate of otherwise disconnected perceptual events” (31). However, when this picture is combined with the psyche, performativity is the adhesive for the subject, constituted by power itself, wherein the subject must continue to act to defer its own existence. Foucault’s regulatory mechanisms are held together by a psyche regulated by citationality and a Lacanian Law producing abjection and passionate attachments, the latter of which overcomes Foucault’s, at times, lighthearted stance on the subject’s ability to choose.^{ix}

The Law(s) in Butler’s work comes face-to-face with issues of regulation and subversion, whereby the subject must repeat the Law, but this does not necessarily need to be a faithful repetition (although consequences may persist for such indignation). This subversive repetition can “come to *displace*” currently accepted norms, resulting in such developments as gender-bending, passing (race), or political reinterpretation (constitutionalism) (Butler 2011, 56). Roland Faber (2011) wonderfully captures the capacity of the Law which, built on past hegemonic formations and depending on its current repetition to ensure its future, “cannot totally erase its own becoming (out of which it is generated) but that in its ‘foreclosure’ always draws the chaotic element of ‘contingency’ that it excludes” (28). Thus, what Butler adds to Foucault is a theory of subjectivity to his “Analytics of Power,” but in drawing the parameters of this relation delivers the concepts of the constituted outside, passionate attachments and abjection, all of which are intrinsic to the psyche. Difference was a topic Foucault was not keen to approach throughout his career.^x However, Butler understands that if identifiers are produced differentially, any “absolute” universal is deductively impossible, such that “every subject position is constituted differentially, and that what is produced as the ‘constituted outside’ of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent” (2000b, 12). Where Foucault does become of use on this issue is his understanding of resistance and domination, for if an identity is always posited differentially, i.e., some subject is always excluded, this is not a

“powerless” exclusion as resistance is inherently possible as a force (not a passive option): “[Resistances] are the odd term in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite...producing cleavages in a society that shifts about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings” (Foucault 1990, 96). Moreover, in order for livable, stable lives to come into existence, some forms of domination are always inherent to power (although the forms are contingent); with a loose understanding of resistance and domination, Foucault enables their application in every genealogical circumstance, though not understood uniformly. Along with this, abjection and passionate attachments contribute to domination and resistance by helping differentiate the capabilities/restrictions of the subject, addressing Butler’s criticism on ambiguity between the subject and power.

In many ways, Butler is able to bestow upon Foucault a more defensible stance by allocations from her own theory. With that in mind, Butler herself must inherit more of Foucault’s thought to compensate for her own faults and weaknesses. Butler advocates the contingency of social norms, yet she clings to psychoanalytic tools without the allowance of their historically contingent implementation, e.g., internalization, foreclosure, melancholia, etc. As she writes, “Language only comes into being through that foreclosure or primary prohibition” (2011, 157). In this example, foreclosure is seen as a necessity of identity formation via prohibition, but there are numerous dilemmas with this. First, it understands these instantiations as happening universally across the psyche—at least when discussing psychoanalysis—instead of incorporating Foucauldian multiplicity into this facet of her writing: “Such subjection is a kind of power that not only unilaterally *acts on* a given individual as a form of domination, but also *activates* or forms the subject” (Butler 1997b, 84). In doing so, she ignores the potential of Foucault’s divided-subjects, which requires a Butlerian psyche: “The subject is either divided within himself or divided from others” (Foucault 1983b, 208). Secondly, her usage of psychoanalysis relies

heavily on prohibition to interpret Foucault's productive power; this leads to a contradiction where something like foreclosure, which is supposed to be the effect of power, is actually the cause. Finally, she has an uncanny inability to incorporate historical perspectives and analysis on these issues, so a stronger historical awareness, via Foucault, must be assimilated into her philosophy.

(4.3) Contextualizing the Subject: The History of the Psyche

Butler's and Foucault's goals can be viewed as similar in that they both try to understand the subject as a product of power; nevertheless, Foucault focuses on the historical situatedness of the subject and how it comes to arise historically while Butler focuses on the process by which the subject comes into and remains in existence. As noted by Mark Kelly (2009), "A psychoanalytic analysis of subjectivity is not about understanding its historic-analytical analysis of subjectivity, but rather about revealing its universal structure" (90). However, Butler adheres so much to this position that it limits her analytic capacities. Susan Bordo (2003) illustrates that perspectives are always "invested with our social, political, and personal interests, inescapably-centric in one way or another," and Butler overlooks this insight in many ways with her incorporation of psychoanalytic tools and turn from Foucault's historical work. Foucault's ambitions were to move "toward a definition of the specific domain formed by power relations, *and* toward a determination of the instruments that will make possible its analysis" (Foucault 1990, 82, my italics). Butler certainly cannot be attacked for ignoring the latter goal; regardless, the lack of the prior puts her scrutinizing potential in a box. Lloyd discerns two genealogical components: (1) to unveil historical sedimentation (banal facts) and (2) to determine where points of weakness in power structures are and where change is possible (2005, 119). Butler's opinion is that demonstrating contingency through immanent critique is enough to move forward, but that is similar to saying there is a problem, yet not quite knowing what the problem is.

Respectively, Butler needs a stronger theory of historical contextualization to understand the subject, power and *dispositifs* more completely, solvable by what Foucault termed “the *how* of power” (1994b, 31).^{xi} Foucault’s focus is, quite distinctly, not on what power is, since its essence is produced through discourses and practices, but *how* it is exercised, or “What sort of exercise does it involve?” (ibid., 28). For Butler, all repetition works through mimicry, but she fails to explain the context of copies, i.e., that not all copies are identically made nor created with the same (social) material with the same intention or results. In contrast, Foucault uses *dispositifs* to demonstrate the multiplicity of repetition, wherein they are not reducible to one another, allowing for a more coherent explanation of how power and *dispositifs* shape our understanding of the world and how we repeat acts. In doing so, he can undertake practical problems that arise from any *régime du savoir*, such as his work on the art of governance (governmentality) by which he desired “to pin down the specific type of political rationality the state produced” (Foucault 2003b, 192). Realizing the subject is an effect of power relations, it seems odd that Butler’s acumen would be blind to the historical construction of *dispositifs* that has left her vulnerable to criticisms of an “inability to name forms of domination” (Thompson 1996, 325).^{xii} Consequently, an intake of what Foucault deems “historical awareness,” or “the historical conditions which motivate our conceptualization,” would allow Butler to contextually understand subject formation and her process ontology much better (Foucault 1983b, 209).^{xiii}

Ernesto Laclau (2000b) declares that Butler would need “to provide some ontology of historicity” to overcome this problem (183-84), and Lloyd (2007) articulates that Butler’s concentration is on “the general possibilities of resignification,” slighting the “*historical* circumstances” and making her analysis too vague for pragmatic application (125). Foucault offers not only a historical awareness of social norms (Holmes 1997; May 2006; Oksala 2005; Simons 1995), but also emphasizes the need of fishing out *dispositifs* within our present,

concentrating on power's "infinitesimal mechanisms," its "techniques and tactics," to clear up how it is "invested, colonized, utilized, involuted, transformed, displaced, [and] extended" in our own epoch (Foucault 2003b, 37). This also opens up paths to reevaluate Butlerian subversive repetition, with contextualized strategies aimed at specific *dispositifs* or relations rather than the base declaration that norms can be subverted. Lloyd gives the particular instance of white gay men subversively repeating norms with "deeply troubling effects" for black gay men, or even women (2005, 144).^{xiv} It is this subversive potential that Foucault honed in on with his genealogical method: "The successes of history belong to those who are capable of seizing these rules, to replace those who had used them, to disguise themselves so as to pervert them, invert their meaning, and redirect them against those who had initially imposed them" (2003a, 359). However, Foucault sponsors a strategy without a method in the absence of Butler's more substantive theory of psychic-regulation, whereas, deprived of this contextualizing supplement, Butler is caught in a bind where she is unable to "realistically assess" nondiscursive practices (Fraser 1995, 163), various inequalities internationally and interregionally (Beck-Gernsheim 2003, 77), or even properly inquire into categories of gender (or other identifiers) (Chambers and Carver 2008, 66). In effect, Butler is not able to *strategically* affect social norms—although perhaps she can *blindly* affect them—without an analysis into their intentions, local mechanisms and emotional traces. It is because of this Foucault argued that altering ideologies sans the restructuring of *dispositifs*—power's minute mechanisms in particular—changes nothing (Foucault 1980a, 60). Be that as it may, in order for Butler to appropriate historical genealogy into her philosophy, her reading of Foucauldian productive power must be investigated and reinterpreted.

In the late-1970s and 1980s, Foucault began to reject the "juridical" understanding of power, whereby what is taken to be natural is repressed through psychoanalytic or realist (in a political sense) restriction. He incorporated

dispositifs and their means to explain “a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them”; this is achieved not *solely* through structures such as “foreclosure” or “internalization,” at least as Butler uses them,^{xv} but also “to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces” within a network of power relations (Foucault 1990, 136). In contrast, Butler believes that the subject is prohibited, and out of this prohibition something is produced, or, as Butler writes, “Juridical power inevitably ‘produces’ what it claims merely to represent” (2010, 3).^{xvi} On the other hand, Foucault argues that prohibition, as well as its results, are produced effects of power relations, i.e., prohibition is not the cause but the effect of power and it produces further effects through its deployment; others (Kirby 2006; Lloyd 2005; McNay 2000) have interpreted Foucault as claiming prohibition is an effect and criticized Butler for interpreting him in such a dissimilar light whereby psychoanalytic tools are the ultimate ground and not effects of power. Butler’s “restriction *in* production,” nevertheless, does not need to be forfeited completely, but tweaked into a contingent structuring, whereby psychoanalytic tools are seen not as universal but historical (Butler 1997b, 84). This entails (1) accepting a more generative picture of power and (2) acknowledging the reciprocity of the subject and discourse. In other words, subject-forming mechanisms, such as internalization, foreclosure and melancholia, are produced by the very systems of power through which they are deployed, and in deferring these mechanisms through repetition-citation, the subject consistently contributes to their sedimentation. This does not repudiate or deny them but adds to an understanding of how they are exercised on the subject and vice versa.

If the case is that these psychoanalytic tools producing the subject under various guises are historically implemented, then they would qualify as *dispositifs*, and are thus open to genealogical investigation. Moreover, it is precisely in these contexts, “in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to

feel is without history—in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts,” that genealogy is intended to explore (Foucault 2003a, 351). Foucauldian power only exists in context; it merely insinuates different force relations establishing or preventing movements, meaning power is only possible (meaningful) in a contextualized field. If Butler wishes to attribute “the repressive law” both “as a negative or exclusionary code” as well as the “law of discourse,” her desire to posit this as an intrinsic facet of the subject’s formation must be opened up to contestation (2010, 89). Butler’s problem is her failure to separate normality, which would be her incorporation of disciplinary power, from normalization, which is her theory of performativity (see chapter two). In the absence of a historical program, Butler consequently *takes* the disciplinary subject *for granted* and posits its construction as a universal formation. Disciplinary power rose out of *dispositifs* molded in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whereby the individual, the “docile body” in Foucauldian parlance, was constructed out of mechanisms intended to coerce the subject into regulating itself; some of this was through the mechanisms psychoanalysis founded. The disciplinary mechanisms set about implementing a self-regulating subject through the internalization of social norms rather than the forceful interdiction of a sovereign, yet this depends on the subject developing capabilities to fulfill tasks (Best 2005; Heyes 2011; May 2006).

The dilemma herein is that Butler’s psychoanalytic “tools” seem much closer to productions of disciplinary power than to be inherent facets to the psychic subject (normality versus normalization), at least in their deployment. Butler emphasizes, “Subjection is... a restriction without which the production of the subject cannot take place, a restriction through which that production takes place” (1997b, 84). However, this does not need to be equated with a unilateral functioning that is essentially anti-Foucauldian as it posits these mechanisms work homogeneously across the entirety of the subject (Butler 2011, 50; 1997b, 168). For instance, not only does Butlerian foreclosure—as the site of restriction—claim to produce possibilities for the subject, it also exposes an

entirely restrictive paradigm (i.e., foreclosure is the ultimate grounding which works through repudiation and barring) which cannot account for the production of its own restriction. On top of that, Butler argues it happens universally for all subjects in the same manner; yet, Feder argues that even if *dispositifs* “work in complementary ways,” it does not suffice to say that they “work in the *same way*” (2007, 62). This evolves into a neglect of other forms of power Foucault discussed, which do not work restrictively but enable the capabilities of the subject, such as biopower, governmentality and pastoral power. By confining herself to the solidification of psychoanalytic tools, Butler tends to take disciplinary power, chiefly when discussing psychoanalysis, to be *the power* (*le pouvoir*), whereas in reality it is a *contingent form* of power: “A normalizing society is the *historical outcome* of a technology of power centered on life” (Foucault 1990, 144, my italics).^{xvii} Thus, Butler’s philosophy must revise its understanding of psychic processes in a way that understands the process, and its effects, as produced in historical situations. This would allow a honing in on specific formations of power networks that procedurally construct the subject, thereby promoting a more practical and useful critique that can be employed to form strategies to combat domination.

The incorporation of historical awareness allows Butler to properly confront and understand *forms* of power, adding to her desire to show social contingency. One of the most vexing lapses in Butler’s process ontology is this dearth of historical contextualization, which has led to a great deal of confusion and inaccuracy within her own paradigm due to a focus on the current situation and ignoring the process of past sedimentation. One instance is disciplinary power by which the subject is disciplined in various ways to produce specified capabilities and desires; this form of power individualizes the subject so as to act on them such that it is “optimizing forces, aptitudes, and life in general,” which was quite a break from sovereign power whereby the sovereign restricted the abilities of his subjects through physical force and sovereign right (Foucault

1990, 139).^{xviii} This is contrasted with governmentality, or “the art of government” (2007, 313), which does not *produce* the capabilities of the subject but instead produces the guidance and regulation of them. John Ransom (1997) explains, “In governance the existing inclinations of individuals are manipulated,” which functions separately from disciplinary mechanisms that “create a particular capacity among a group of individuals” (31).^{xix} These two forms of power, which saw a break with sovereign power (in the case of disciplinary power) and pastoral power (in the case of governmentality), correlatively, are further defined by their relation to biopower, or at times referred to as biopolitics, which regulates the population of the state rather than the individual subject: “Supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and *regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population*” (Foucault 1990, 139). The “supervision” is kept in place by the creation of quantitative and qualitative measures directed at the regulation of masses: birth rates, death rates, unemployment, disability, taxation, trade agreements and social services aimed at the health of the population over the individual. This type of power repudiates “the edifice of right” (sovereign power) to foster the “human sciences” as the “domain” and “clinical knowledge” as “jurisprudence” (Foucault 2003b, 44).^{xx} Without this sort of historical demarcation, Butler risks strong misinterpretations when it comes to subversive repetition and an insurmountable hitch in developing political strategies.

Moreover, these forms of power do not work in solitude but interact and complicitly work *through* one another, at times heterogeneously and at other times homogeneously. They arise due to historically contingent needs, crises, force relations, problems (social, political, economic, medical) and circumstances. For example, Butler could psychoanalytically probe disciplinary power to discern a concentration of hypermasculinity in the U.S.’s Black community as combatable by subversively effeminizing masculine norms; however, this strategy is oblivious to the historical use of effeminization and sexuality to oppress and

disenfranchise Black males (Hutchinson 1999; McBride 1999). The production of such oppression works through *dispositifs* in disciplinary *and* biopolitical power—both on the individual and the population—including social, economic and political initiatives. A further example where Butler’s philosophy might fail to appropriately strategize domination could be that of genocide, a term constituted in the twentieth century to describe the execution of a group in mass. Without the historical context of genocide, Butler’s perspective would boil this down to a system of tense difference where one group wants to obliterate its Other; however, Foucault performed a genealogical inquiry into racism and genocide which illustrates that genocide is not a bringing back of sovereign power—as Butler’s theory would likely advance—but a recent augmentation of biopolitics concentrated on the health of the population: “If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers, this is not because of a recent return of the ancient right to kill; it is because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population” (1990, 137). This leaves Butler in dire straits when it comes to forming effective and efficient strategies, especially in these cases where to act wrongly is easily a *matter* of life and death. She does not properly theorize the relationship between the subject and discourse in its contextual complexity; it is not solely the potential of subversion, but also understanding *how* norms are repeated, *how* sedimented vectors prevent certain repetitions and encourage others. Discourse relies on a two-way movement (discourse influences the subject/the subject employs repetition), yet this works on a multitude of axes: psychoanalytic foreclosure, physical force, disciplinary coercion, kinship ties, sexual culture, etc. Indeed, a web of crossing acts, failed or successful, using a variety of faculties and techniques, forming different connections, points of sensitivity or restrictions, affect *how* we repeat norms; to reduce this to abstraction is to misunderstand power.

(4.4) Conclusion: The Usage of a Butler-Foucault Synthesis

This chapter has explored the synthesis of Butler's and Foucault's philosophies in numerous dimensions to find a compatible reading, with some mending to both, that would promote a methodology capable of handling issues practically within a constructivist framework. Butler's process ontology is seen as a foundation to explain the subject as a discursive practice that must cite sedimented paradigms to intelligibly act in the present; by doing so, the subject not only defers the meaning of its acts and identifiers for future usages, necessarily, making room for subversion but also acquires its durability and intelligible existence. Placing her psychoanalytic tools in contingency, Foucauldian power is able to contextually assess the mechanisms by which the subject is formed to various extents and map out points of weakness such mechanisms are subject to, thereby spotlighting the most practical and cogent approaches to resistance. This depends on delving into the historicity of not only the subject but also its society, which is the accumulation of a multiplicity of force relations solidifying and dispersing in their own right along a temporal spectrum. This method allows a genealogist to draw out *dispositifs* that have produced the manners through which the subject thinks, acts and speaks and distinguish repetitive norms with the potential to resist from the ones without such potential. The question then becomes whether this method is fruitful and what would be its value or purpose.

In the next chapter, I display two brief case studies in which I employ the method laid out thus far. By looking at the case of Black women and gay men in the context of contemporary U.S. culture, I show that the Foucault-Butler synthesis exhibits that the subject is divisionally produced, relying on a process ontology to relay its existence. The state of Black women and gays in the U.S. shows how a lack of context in Butler blocks her from comprehensively addressing this subjectivity, while also demonstrating that Foucault requires a psychic account found in Butler to analyze norms and their sedimentation in

different power relations. In effect, the psyche is a produced interior essence of the subject that regulates it, actively and passively, within networks of power relations (forms of power) that are analyzable. Such an analysis gets to the heart of what, I believe, is the intention of Butler and Foucault: violence. While violence may seem arbitrary, it has been the focus of Butler's ("unintelligibility") and Foucault's ("domination") work, both of whom aim at a better understanding of violence to make more lives livable. I also view it as an alternative reason for the value of genealogy, in contrast with the traditional argument that opening up the ability to choose is important for those who value freedom.^{xxi} My aim is not to perform but promote an "Analytics of Violence," as Foucault might deem it, to understand how violence shapes and influences the subject from a dispersal of directions on different levels. Such an "Analytics" demonstrates that we cannot talk about *what* is real without asking *how* it is real. Once this is understood, the role violence has in subject-formation is revealed as more complex than previously assumed, requiring a more context-based investigation of violence; however, such an "Analytics" also allows the ability to shape ourselves through *a strategy of repetition*. I argue that pragmatic strategies can be developed from a Foucault-Butler synthesis to both understand violence in context and work to desedimentize and combat the domination it imposes.

CHAPTER 5

BLACKNESS IN CONTEXT: SEDIMENTED NORMS, CONFLICTED SELVES

(5.1) Introduction

The confines of a Foucault-Butler synthesis are directed towards a process ontology where a subject, which is discursively constituted in contrast with the prediscursive subject of traditional philosophy, constantly performs its existence through power relations constructing social intelligibility, i.e., existence as the subject knows it, that is deferred through the repetitive actions of the subject. While a Butlerian psyche is invoked to explain the subjective constructivism of this theory, in that the subject endows itself in its identity through passionate attachments and abjection through the citing of the Law(s), Foucauldian power and *dispositifs* help inform a genealogical approach that enables a contextualized mapping out of how the subject exists and how power relations are exercised. This inverts the conventional understanding of identifiers gaining their meaning from essentialist qualities; instead, the performance of the identifiers themselves produce meaning that is only “essential” in appearance.

My aim in this chapter is to demonstrate two case studies where Butler and Foucault alone are incapable of accounting for subjectivity, yet their synthesis is able to situate the subject within a historicized process ontology where the capabilities and restrictions of the subject are defined through social context. The first case divulges the situation of Black women in the contemporary U.S. This section aims at explicating the development of psychoanalytic “faculties” that Butler discusses to elucidate that they are historically

implemented, i.e., not universal. In fact, these are the products of a plethora of forms of power and *dispositifs*. The second case elaborates on gay Black men in the U.S. This section illuminates the complexities of the subjective construction, which involves conflicting and overlapping identity investments that result in psychic splits discussed in Foucault, yet a Butlerian psyche works as an adhesive to attach these fissured psyches into one subject. In the process of laying these two cases out, I wish to show that (1) neither Butler nor Foucault can stand alone, but require a reinterpretation of both of their theories as has been laid out in this work and (2) that the analysis performed up to now remains incomplete, requiring an analysis of the limits of violence, or an “Analytics of Violence,” to fully account for the subject. Consequently, this chapter’s goal is to reinforce the arguments and conclusions made so far while calling for a further investigation into violence, using what has been put forth, to gain a more coherent understanding of the performative subject and the process ontology through which it exists.

(5.2) The Violence of Internalization: Self-Reflecting Black Womanhood

One of the main criticisms directed towards feminism and gender studies has been their foundation in the perspectives of Caucasian women, whether heterosexual or otherwise (Allen 1999; Feder 2007; hooks 2015; McBride 1999; Terborg-Penn 2004) while, at the same time, Critical Race Theory has tended to focus on the problems of Black men, eclipsing the issues “Black women” face (Collins 2004; Harris 1999; Lau 2011) and at times even punishing them for speaking out about the wrongdoings of Black men (Awkward 1999; Bobo 2004).ⁱ When viewed demographically, the category of “Black women” can appear grim and deterministic, with many hardships limiting, restricting and influencing possibilities: increased health risks (Lau 2011; Viladrich and Loue 2009), economic oppression and employment discrimination (Hirsch and Lyons 2010; Massey and Denton 2001; Neubeck and Cazenave 2001; Quadagno 1994) and

housing as well as educational segregation (Allen 1999; Gumbrecht 2014; Massey and Denton 2001) which can lead to a heightened exposure to drugs, physical violence and sexual abuse (Kaplan 1997; Roberts 1997; Windsor et al. 2010). As discussed in previous chapters, Butler's psyche presents an opportunity to break the illusion of determinism by attributing agency to individuals identifying as Black women (as well as a range of other identifiers) by understanding them not as "ever passive" receptors of hegemonic forces, but as an active subject who is affected by power in contextually specific manners (McBride 1999, 271).

For Butler, the subject relies on a Nietzschean "turning back," an original and persisting "self-reflexivity" whereby foreclosure (repudiation) gives rise to conscience, that is to say the internalization of social norms (socialization). In effect, the psyche is constituted by power in that it reflects this power back to the system from which it came, whereby oppressive identifiers have the capacity to enable the subject, or as Butler explains, "The subject is the effect of power in recoil" (1997b, 6). In order for the subject to come into existence, there must be an abjection (the primary foreclosure) (ibid., 9) and a passionate attachment (conscience) (ibid., 33) which are developed when the subject internalizes the Law to constitute itself intelligibly in networks of power relations: "Barring [i.e., foreclosure] is an action that is not exactly performed *on* a pre-given subject, but performed in such a way that the subject itself is performatively produced as a result of this primary cut" (Butler 1997a, 138).ⁱⁱ Foreclosure thereby attaches the identifier of "Blackness" to women through a racial "Law" that requires the reiteration of racial norms to propel itself (Ehlers 2008; McWhorter 2004); internalizing the Law, and one's social position within it, causes the subject to give rise to itself via power (Butler 1997a, 139). Thus, the subject's interpellation grants it the status of an "I," a continued sanctioned existence within the social order such that it "turns back" on itself to internalize norms, i.e., obtain a conscience: "Conscience is the means by which a subject becomes an object for

itself, reflecting on itself, establishing itself as reflective and reflexive” (Butler 1997b, 22). The psyche is shown to be the internalization of social norms over time to retain a sense of self-identity (ibid., 63-4), yet this only exists through a primary, violent punishment (prohibition) to create the “I” (ibid., 74). Moreover, Butler writes, “The doubling back of desire that culminates in reflexivity produces, however, another order of desire: the desire for that very circuit, for reflexivity, and, ultimately, for subjection” (ibid., 22). Namely, being “Black” requires an acknowledgment of race, for without an acceptance of a racial identity, it is impossible to invest oneself in “Blackness,” Black Power or Black pride—all of which function along the *dispositif* of race.

Therefore, even though race may be a construct for Butler, it is restrictively produced and not without serious implications for identity.ⁱⁱⁱ For example, the categories of “Black” and the “Black community” are used as totalitarian tools that demonstrate a sedimentation that occurs, with certain political forces in play, to establish how “Blackness” is made intelligible in U.S. culture (Collins 2004; McBride 2005). Along with this, the additive of “Black” to “women” presumes that one’s sex/gender is more primitive than one’s race, while also associating the normal “woman” with an unspoken (White)^{iv}; this reinforces the idea that “Black women” is a unified category, overlooking its reliance on a plurality of Black “bodies” (DuCille 2004; Lau 2011), a variety of academic and non-academic positions (Davis 2004; Puigvert 2003) and a separation of experiences between classes (Schiele 2005). In disciplinary terms, women who identify as Black are exposed to interpellations, willingly or unwillingly, as sexual “freaks” and/or dramatic “bitches,” often with the help of Black male comedians and musicians (Collins 2004, 122). In the process, the boundaries between “liberalized” and “materialized” identities come to be blurred, resulting in the internalization of these standards (as a sexual object versus as an active agent) by Black women themselves to different extents (ibid., 126). Unlike their (White) counterparts, Black women are often confronted with their particularity

in a culture whose hegemonic ethos differs from the values internalized in their own neighborhoods and families, which can lead to an internalization of a Eurocentric ethos (Schiele 2005, 805-6) and/or them coming to have negative self-images (Ducille 2004; McWhorter 2004). In Butlerian terms, when “ideal” femininity is projected as (White), Black women face an impossibility that is then internalized; (White) women may face extreme difficulty, and potentially forego harmful health habits, to achieve an ideal, yet Black women are incapable of mimicking the image of ideality even if they are able to replicate the body shape and mentality.

However, according to Butler, by adopting the identifier of “Black,” or participating in the formation and repetition of “Blackness,” Black women are able to generate new self-images and capabilities they would not have otherwise. Subversive repetition opens up doors since norms of “Blackness” rely on reiteration (deferral). As Nadine Ehlers (2008) explains, being a subject in contemporary Western culture relies on “reading” people via race, but in doing so—in being exposed to the disciplinary techniques of a racial *dispositif*—race both imposes an identity onto the subject while simultaneously activating that identity as a participant in a process ontology (338). Where Butler seems to run into problems is her lack of strategy, with many attempts to redefine (subvert) Black femininity and sexuality failing or proving disastrous (Davis 2004; Gonzales and Rolison 2005; hooks 2015) or subversive attempts to redefine the image of “Black women” being (inappropriately) sexualized (Bobo 2004; DuCille 2004; Feder 2007), consistently sedimenting links between promiscuity and “Blackness.” It is not by chance that the image of “Black femininity” occupies a more sexualized position within the U.S. than (White) femininity; this plays on the larger historical context of Black women—whether economically, politically or educationally—by which Black womanhood has been sedimented by hegemonic forces in a sexualized manner. Working from Butler’s adherence to contingency, Black women could push towards subverting the norms of

masculinity within the Black community, but this has resulted in anger and attacks against them (Awkward 1999; Nair & Thomas 2012). There could be a concentrated effort at resisting oppression or promoting a Black identity, but this has led to a hegemonic outcry and hostility to the “Black” community (Schiele 2005; Payne 2016). On this point, Butlerian subversive repetitions are, at times, called into question due to a lack of effectiveness (hooks 2015; McNay 2000). Even the terminology associated with Black femininity resisted resignification during the 1990s and 2000s while queer terms such as “fag” and “queen” were appropriated (albeit not easily). With Butler, there is no historical account of these dilemmas to understand how they came to be nor how they are exercised; adding Foucault’s genealogy and *dispositifs* would allow a stronger strategy-making foundation to be set (Foucault 2003b, 2003c, 2007). The relationship to sexuality in the “Black community” and the “queer community” starkly contrasts, meaning the tactics which subverted queer stereotypes cannot simply be redeployed in a “Black” context. Such historical strategizing would also assist in comprehending how subjects (come to) exist in any context, for surely race does not work solely through disciplinary mechanisms, which is what Butler’s psychoanalytic heritage allots.^v

Consider the caricature of “welfare queens,” or Black women that siphon off governmental resources to live an extravagant life while they litter the society with their offspring.^{vi} A great deal is at play in this racist portrayal, but to understand its effects and functioning, a historical narrative must be given to see how race functions through disciplinary power, governmentality *and* biopower. In its genesis, race was strongly indoctrinated in anthropology, ethnology and biology, whereby a valuation system was attributed to different “Races of Man” (Feder 2007; McWhorter 2004; Zack 2004); in the process, “Blackness” was connected to an animalistic nature: “Black people” were portrayed as obsessed with “fucking” rather than having/raising civilized children (Collins 2004, 103-4). This adhered “promiscuity” to the social image of “Black,” justifying the rape,

punishment, experimentation and exploitation (both physical and economic) of Black women (Roberts 1997; McClintock 1995; J. Young 2005). At present, this has developed into a social issue revolving around the effects of policies implemented during the pre-Civil War era when America functioned as an agricultural society; at that time, Black women were encouraged to have many children as it was a source of cheap labor, but after the Industrial Revolution a new work force of skilled, educated laborers was required: big families became expensive, especially regarding health care and education (Zinn 2009). However, the techniques aimed at impoverishing and disenfranchising Black women were kept in place, leading the “State” to implement policies to restrict their reproductive (bodily) rights and leaving them to institutions of which they had—and continue to have—little-to-no control over (Oliver and Shapiro 2006; Roberts 1997). Consequently, as Patricia Hill Collins (2004) notes, “Rather than looking at lack of sex education, poverty, [and] sexual assault...researchers and policy makers often blame the [Black] women themselves and assume that the women are incapable of making their own decisions” (104).

Without looking into this historical context, the analyst cannot determine how subversively effective a repetition actually is (or even if it is subversive). Butler is left to assume that race functions solely through disciplinary tactics, when in reality governmentality (governing Black Americans in the U.S. through state policies) and biopolitics (regulating birth rates of Black Americans and segregating them into impoverished “ghettos”) play a significant role in how race is “passionately” attached to one’s identity, i.e., its psychic investment, which requires contextualizing, historically and socially (Allen 1999; Feder 2007), Butler’s account of performative process ontology.^{vii} Moreover, Butler risks promoting psychoanalytic tools as inherent to psychic formation without accounting for the variations by which they occur. For example, the internalizations of norms, which constructs self-reflexivity, can be seen as varying between those belonging to hegemonic identities, e.g. (White), and

minority identities, e.g., Black, Native American, Latino, etc. One can look at the structuring of families within Black demographics and (White) demographics. For the (White) American, disciplinary power would reinforce the internalization of biopower—one is disciplined to fulfill the role of the norm, which is regulated by biopower—whereas Black Americans face a divide between a disciplinary power that attempts to incorporate them into the “norm” which is interrupted by a biopower that pushes them (socially/economically/legally) to the borders of social intelligibility.^{viii} Considering the example of education, (White) English dialects are taught in schools (disciplinary), only reinforcing the normativity of social norms dependent on grammatical structures (biopolitics); in contrast to this, minority dialects, such as those often found in impoverished Black communities, are expunged from course curriculums and portrayed as inherently incorrect on the basis of normative rules. This can affect employment opportunities if you fail to internalize the “correct” dialect and the difficulty with choosing between maintaining a linguistic connection to your culture or abandoning it through aggressive assimilation tactics (disciplinary) while a political system striving for stability and predictability ghettoizes and regulates your community to sustain a “healthy” social system (biopower) (Massey and Denton 2001). On top of this, “Black women” occupying different social positions—or even different neighborhoods—will be subjected to different techniques of power and, therefore, different formations of self-reflexivity. This inherent openness to power’s initial imposition is called the “primary vulnerability” by Butler (2004c) and demonstrates that violence, whether imposing or imposed upon, has a central role in shaping the subject. With this in mind, historical inquiry into systems of power still falls short of fully describing the construction of the subject and its social environment. Without an investigation into violence—such as those Butler and Foucault begin to describe—there remains an inability to determine the extents of power’s effect; the theorist remains incapable of understanding violence’s role in shaping the

subject's identity and actions in more subversive ways, *and* the different manners in which the psyche and its formation(s) exist pose an increasingly urgent domain, especially for non-hegemonic identities.

(5.3) Insufferable Cracks: The Black/Gay Male and Psychic Splits

If Black women face discrimination and oppression from social and historical circumstances, Black gay men (BGM) face an unequivocal set of problems, some related to those aforementioned. In this section, I introduce a discussion of the Butlerian psyche and the theoretical as well as pragmatic difficulties it faces in regards to psychic fragmentations, i.e., identity splits and fissures, in the context of BGM within the U.S. Layli Phillips and Marla Stewart (2008) enunciate the failure of theories, such as Butler's, to account for multiple identifications in that "many people maintain some psychological affiliation with multiple social groups simultaneously... Thus, these models [of identity] are not sufficiently complex" (379-80). Butler certainly addresses different identifications, but her psychoanalytic influences imply a form of unity when it comes to psychic formation in such phenomena as foreclosure, melancholia or internalization. Moreover, she understands the reader as having a preconceived idea of what "homosexuality" or "gay" connote (Butler 1997a, 105; 1997b, 132-33; 2010, 94, 165; 2011, 34, 177), whereas the formulation and practice of homosexuality varies significantly across cultures and races (Chan 2011; Greenberg 1988; Monteiro & Fuqua 1994) and the academic research performed on "gay" identity formation predominantly encompasses the experiences of (White) homosexuals (Meyer 2012; Nair & Thomas 2012; Phillips and Stewart 2008). In order to account for these, Foucauldian productive power can be reinvigorated into Butler's psyche to understand psychoanalytic tools as culturally constructed, allowing Foucault's defense of split identities ("sub-individuals") to be comprehensible. Simultaneously, Foucault requires a Butlerian psyche to explain sustainable cultural experiences and identities to

elucidate subject- and power-durability. In doing so, a redefined and empowered version of genealogy and the psyche become possible as an analytic tool for understanding the oppression and agency of individuals such as BGM.

At the heart of this issue is understanding the invisibility of BGM in the discussion of identity formation. The uninvestigated induction present in the academic community and U.S. culture in general is that BGM would merely face discriminations of (White) gay men in addition to racial discriminations. This is complicated by a lack of research on BGM (Cochran & Mays 1999; Flannigan-Saint-Aubin 1993; Ongiri 1997;), but it has been noted that BGM and (White) gay men develop their gay identities in starkly disparate manners (Diclemente and Peterson 1994; McBride 1999; Stokes *et al.* 1996). For instance, BGM who experience acts of physical and verbal violence perceive this stemming from the perception that they are *mis*representing their race, with the violence on occasion becoming a masculinity contest (Meyer 2012). Thus, not only are BGM's psychic interpellation and development left in an ambiguous void, but the ability of these men to academically investigate their identity and develop subversive strategies is left impeded. Another troubling aspect is that "queer" literature has a habit of emphasizing the "coming out" of gays, yet this is highly grounded in (White) experiences of homosexuality; for ethnic minorities, "coming out" can be an extremely alienating experience that oftentimes sparks violent reactions from family and the community (Nair & Thomas 2012, 68), yet BGM are socially coerced into this event or risk the internalized notion of not being "true" to themselves, a firmly-held position in the U.S.'s gay community (*ibid.*, 67). This is not to say (White) homosexuals are unaffected by "coming out," but solace is typically found in a "new" family, the gay community, which mimics the structures of the Anglo-Saxon family. This has been the hallmark of homosexual identity since the 1990s, and to have this foreclosed presents a psychic separation or boundary that limits BGM from adhering to the social norms of the gay community. On top of all this—or perhaps as a result—there has been continuous

evidence of the racism present in the gay community (Icard 1986; Phillips & Steward 2008); this information becomes increasingly worrisome as many BGM migrate to the city to avoid confrontations and discriminations from their rural communities (Hawkeswood 1997; Martin & Dean 1990) while frequently limiting their exposure to the urban gay community due to racism, forced “outings” by association and self-stigmatizing emotions about their sexuality (Miller 2007; Stokes *et al.* 1996). In effect, BGM are at risk to have a split identity between their personal experience of sexuality and the “Gay” identifier, wherein the interpellation of homosexuality never occurs unilaterally across the psyche, as Butler argues (1997b, 86-87; 2010, 86), but is layered and split between different loyalties and restrictions.

To further complicate matters, BGM face a plethora of violent exclusionary tactics within the confines of the “Black community” and their access to “Blackness.” As noted above, many ethnic minorities associate masculinity with the cause of homophobic aggressions. This is most likely due to the emphasis the “Black community” has placed on masculinity for “men,” perpetuating the bold claim that “Black is Hetero” and an atmosphere of hypermasculinity (Ehrenreich 2002; Majors and Billson 1992; Ongiri 1997; Ward 2005).^{ix} Not only BGM but also Black men seen as overly effeminate are potential targets of community alienation (McBride 1999; McCready 2004; Ongiri 1997), physical attacks (Meyer 2012; Phillips 2005; Pilkington and D’Augelli 1995) and isolation or loneliness (Ward 2005). This is a much stronger emphasis in the “Black community” than in (White) social norms as Black adults are more prone to homophobia (Brown 2005; Lewis 2003).

From a Butlerian standpoint, the subversive aim would be to destabilize the position of hypermasculinity within the “Black community,” but this has proved a difficult task (Constantine-Simms 2001; Phillips 2005; Wise 2001) and a point of multiple forms of power (biopower, disciplinary power, sovereign

power) that requires the historical context to properly strategize resistant approaches. Sheila Wise (2001) excellently captures these nuances in the occurrence of “manhood” and its attachment to Black identity:

Arriving at manhood is a process. This process includes ascertaining certain values, morals, and experiences and enacting specific responsibilities. Black manhood also implies understanding this state of being in relation to family, community and the larger society. It is necessary to emphasize race in relation to masculinity, manhood, and gender because the definitions and characterizations within the literature reflect the oppression and racism that black men have had to endure in the United States. (6)

In other words, placing “manhood” and “hypermasculinity” in historical and social context will help to shed light on how they are exercised within the Black community and, therefore, their role in shaping the identities of BGM. This includes the historical use of sexuality to disenfranchise Black men, especially through effeminatization and acts of humiliation (Aldrich 2003; Cott 2000; Firebaugh and Davis 1988; Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2005). This evokes biopower (regulation of marriage and economy [Foucault 1990, 2003c]), governmentality (school systems guiding young Blacks to fulfill certain roles [Foucault 2003b, 2007], e.g., prisoner, minimum-wage worker [Massey and Denton 2001] or “Breeder” [Collins 2004; Roberts 1997]), and disciplinary power (self-regulation of “manhood” and “blackness” [Foucault 1980a, 1995]). Not only are BGM blocked from the (White) gay identity, but their access to the Black community is also foreclosed (denied). Many times, BGM internalize the homophobia in Black culture and, to retain the privilege of their seeming heterosexuality, contribute to homophobic violence (Brown 2005); the use of AIDS to promote homosexual blame, and thereby homosexual discrimination, in the Black community (Lima *et al.* 1993; Miller 2007) and the exile from the Black Church, a core social component to the Black community offering many economic and social benefits (Koenig 2003; Pargament *et al.* 2001; Ward 2005), increases feelings of stigmatization and self-discrimination. In this way, BGM face a choice between suppressing their identity to remain an equal within their community^x or expressing their sexuality and opening themselves to violent

discriminations and hardships; either way, BGM face a psychic split between their race and their sexuality (compounded by further identifiers, such as class or religion).

What Butler lacks here is a genealogical context and the willingness to forego some detachment from psychoanalytic foundationalism to acquiesce the expression of split identities and psyches. Not only are these identities split, but they are *violently* split, cracked and shattered through oppressions spoken and unspoken, reiterated upon the body/psyche of BGM in their history and their daily lives. While subversive repetition has the potential to alter discriminatory images, it also has the possibility of further sedimenting the power relations that uphold the bias, i.e., it can be harmful for some minorities depending on the context in which a repetition is performed subversively. For example, subverting masculine norms may be beneficial for BGM, but it is far too dangerous for Black heterosexual males which has led to an increased discrimination; a much better approach would be to subvert the notion of family in the gay community since it is strongly sutured but less sedimented and therefore more open to positive or progressive altercations. As Edward Brown (2005) boldly states, the “suffocating forces that contain these [Black gay] men are debilitating and further hinders their human development over their life span” (36). BGM are split up within their identities by different power relations and *dispositifs*, which is what Butler needs to account for, i.e., she must consider “the apparent contradictions presented by [BGM’s] developing identities” to understand psychic splits and the contingency of psychoanalytic occurrences (Monteiro & Fuqua 1994, 30). However, just as Butler must account for fragmentation and productive power, Foucault needs the psychic cohesion Butler’s philosophy offers, which is not a stagnant mental space but an activity of deconstructing or reinforcing sedimented social norms and ways of life. Wise writes, “Many of the [Black gay] men are not able to entirely articulate these connections [of identities], but they try to work out some way of living with it”; she goes on to argue that this produces a

disparate “consciousness” in these men: conscience does not exist in unison, but the activity of reconciling or interrogating these differences is the process ontology that Butler promises (Wise 2001, 11).

It is through this fragmentation, that has been highlighted in these two sections but occurs within every subject to some extent or another, that the question of “wholeness” and “fragmentation” arises, yet it is always between these that the subject persists. Its actions constantly strive towards one or the other, without ever fully achieving either. The Butlerian psyche strives to overcome the Foucauldian fragmented subject, while the fragmented subject is constantly thrown back upon itself by the adhesive psyche. However, as has been touched upon in this section, a more contextualized approach to violence, which goes beyond Butler’s “context” void and Foucault’s inability to explain durability, is a key component of explaining subject formation: the heterosexual projects homophobia; the Black incites the (White)’s racist fears; the man continually tries to assert his dominative position towards women. Differential identity impels abjection, and abjection, although not always physical, gives rise to various forms of violence. In the following section, I build upon this notion to explain the importance of analyzing violence in context to understand its means of exercise, as only through this line of thought can the violent tendencies inherent in the subject’s identity become understandable.

(5.4) Towards an “Analytics of Violence”

The formation of the subject relies on a complex process of constitution grounded in historical circumstances. The psyche is produced from various networks of power relations situated historically that implement intricate strategies to both confine/ restrict/suppress and produce/develop/empower the subject depending on its position within any given society. This includes the vulnerability to numerous forms of violence that work towards pushing or pulling the psyche in different directions, at times dividing the psyche from within itself. The violence

imposed also depends on how the subject is integrated within power relations, with the examples of Black women and BGM demonstrating their exposure to violence in very different, meaningful ways that do not work uniformly in either group. In laying out these two cases, I wish to show the role violence has in subject formation, which is an inherent feature that oftentimes rejects reductions into theoretical frameworks. This section aims at displaying the problematic nature of violence—its involvement in psychic formation, its difficulty in defining and its importance in understanding the subject and power—within the structure laid out thus far. In doing so, I allocate an alternative justification of the use of genealogy to investigate the subject’s constitution and existence separate from the traditional defense that genealogy enables choices, and cultures valuing freedom would therefore invest in genealogical inquiries (McCarthy 1994; Oksala 2005; Simons 1995). Instead, I posit, in line with Butler’s work on the issue, that understanding violence is correlative with understanding the subject (and ourselves), whether one primarily performs or receives acts of violence. However, it should be noted that I have no intention of illuminating what violence *is*, but rather aim at sparking an “Analytics of Violence” (in the tradition of Foucault) by expressing some of the dilemmas it poses.

In the first instance, violence can be seen as constitutive of the subject, or what Butler terms “primary violence” (1997b, 28), in that the subject must be subjected into a culture that was never of its choosing. It is only through this original interpellation that the subject can come to be intelligible; this intelligibility is in a system where violence is either being enforced or received, i.e., the violent foreclosure of possibilities only transgressed under the threat of punishment or other consequences, to initiate the subject into existence (Schippers 2014, 65). Butler writes, “It becomes incumbent upon us to consider very carefully when and where we engage violence, for violence is, always, an exploitation of that primary tie, that primary way in which we are, as bodies, outside ourselves, for one another,” i.e., the subject is social rather than isolated

(2004c, 22). In much the same way, Foucault asserts that the subject arises from processes of subjections, such that an investigation into the subject requires an investigation into the violence from whence the subject sprung forth: “We should not, therefore, be asking subjects how, why, and by what right they can agree to being subjugated, but showing how actual relations of subjugation manufacture subjects” (Foucault 2003c, 45). The goal becomes elucidating the regulation of the psyche through various forms of power in such a way that one can begin to understand, as Butler calls it, “the internal violence of conscience” (1997b, 183)

One such situation has been outlined in the previous two sections, where the formation of self-reflexivity, or the internalization of social norms, is performed violently upon the subject yet in different ways: Black women experience standards of existence that interpellate them as “bitches” or “freaks,” whether they identify as such or not, and can lead to the internalization of Eurocentric ethics or face social alienation and hostility, whereas BGM face a complex system of interpellations whereby they are self-stigmatizing their sexuality and desires or blocked from core facets of their racial identity. This hereby previews the necessity of investigating domination, and thus violence, in context to understand how it is exercised. Forms of domination that enforce violence are, according to Moya Lloyd (2005), “a particular historical configuration of power relations, without common origin or necessary determining logic” (86). Under a Butler-Foucault synthesis, such an analysis could be accomplished, refuting attacks of lacking sufficient complexity to explain identity (e.g., Moi 2005) or arguments that the subject is inherently unified (e.g., McNay 2000).

Moreover, violence can be seen as a necessary component of power relations, such that the subject is constantly exposed to potential violent forces *and* exerting such violence while existing within a system that works on a violent basis. Projects aimed at comprehending systems of rationality are certainly valuable, yet to deduce that rationality is in some way representative of “Nature”

is to resediment norms within current or arising systems: “There can be no relation of natural continuity between knowledge and the things that knowledge must know. There can only be a relation of violence, domination, power and force, a relation of violation” (Foucault 2001c, 9).^{xi} In this way, violence would depend upon repetition to maintain interpellation and sedimentation, making it a temporally-based occurrence, i.e., violence is grounded in historical circumstances. Based on a Butler-Foucault methodology, this would be contingent upon the modalities of violence, i.e., the manners in which violence is exercised at any geopolitical location and time; consequently, the definition of violence and the exercise of violence, much like power, is based on a series of forces that exist *de facto*. If the analyst or theorist is to understand ontology, which is a “social ontology” in this context, and this ontology is derived from the subject which is formed through violence, understanding existence as such depends on an account of violence (Schippers 2014, 50). By ignoring such violence, one risks a state of obliviousness where the current violence continues uninvestigated and under the radar (McBride 1999; Phillips & Stewart 2008; Riggs & Nair 2012; Žižek 2008).

With all of this in mind, one comes to the dilemma of *defining* or *naming* violence in a unified manner that accounts for the many scruples and technicalities at play. Johanna Oksala (2012) wishes to distinguish between a linguistic violence of exclusion—such as in Butler, Mouffe (2000) or Derrida (1978)—and physical violence, which has the potential to be dispelled from the realm of politics; by desiring not to conflate these two, she seeks to separate them: “Violence is understood to be ineliminable in the first sense [linguistic violence], and this leads to its being treated as a fundamental constant in the second sense [physical violence]” (Oksala FPV, 36). The argument is that one is able to expel physical violence from our lives, yet linguistic violence will always remain; however, is such a division a realistic ambition, or even a desirable one? First, this presumes that physical violence is more severe than linguistic violence

since exclusively handling this violence is her focus, which is an unfair evaluation; as mentioned before, violence always exist in context, and there are many contexts where words can influence one's life, violently, much more than physical action, such as McCarthyism.^{xii} Secondly, it assumes that there is an essential divide between physical and verbal violence. When Doug Meyers (2012) asked a group of LGBT individuals to compare and contrast physical and verbal violence, he found that they had trouble "distinguishing between these forms of abuse, as their violent experiences often did not fit neatly into one category or another" (865). This is further iterated by the context of violence. For example, assaulting a person is a form of violence; yet, assaulting them because they are a homosexual has a very different connotation in mind. If one wishes to link this to intentionality (e.g., Kelly 2009), consider the situation where a homosexual is assaulted because of an argument, but they perceive that violence as homophobic in nature: this would still have violent homophobic repercussions. Verbal slurs directed at homosexuals also have a very different affect than those directed at a heterosexual to question her/his sexuality. "Defining" manhood in such defensive, rigid manners may result in a homosexual or effeminate man to be beaten. Women who are exposed to certain forms of verbal violence may perceive a physical danger involved. Separating these into physical/linguistic violence(s) is oversimplifying the matter. In this respect, I believe an analysis of *forms* of violence, the systems of rationality in which they derive their force and the historical and social circumstances from whence they are developed and deployed as well as their relation to subject formation(s) would provide a much better position to elucidate violences, which would in turn help establish the analysis of individual acts and subjective experiences.

Another instance develops from Butler's coinage of "normative violence" in her 1999 preface to *Gender Trouble*, which is an understanding of violence that is rooted in the norms that suppress certain subjects (2010, xxi). Samuel Chambers and Terrell Carver (2008) latch onto this and try to build on it within

the confines of Butler's work to find a foundational cause of violence: "Normative violence can be thought of as a primary form of violence, because it both *enables* the typical physical violence that we routinely recognize and simultaneously *erases* such violence from our ordinary view" (76).^{xiii} They further comment on normative violence's functioning, which works to exclude the abjected subject from intelligibility, thereby making its life "unlivable" (ibid., 78). However, this formula of violence runs into the problems that Oksala's formulation did while also pushing the role of *dispositifs* and various, non-disciplinary forms of violence out of the picture.

Foucault saw this as a serious flaw in theories of power and violence in that they do not work in unison, e.g., acts of violence do not work unilaterally through a linguistic exclusion nor through a system of derivatives but work cooperatively and competitively to structure violent acts: "[Mechanisms of subjection] do not merely constitute the 'terminal' of more fundamental mechanisms. They entertain a complex and circular relations with other forms" (Foucault 1983b, 213). Moreover, violence is grounded in the rationalities that exercise it, so understanding violence out of context, just like power, leads to generalizations and confusion; if dominations and rationalities only make sense in social situations, then violence qualifies for the same methods of analysis: "Humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination" (Foucault 2003a, 358). Moreover, any time one discusses power, which is the backbone of Foucauldian philosophy and a pillar of Butler's process ontology, one is consequently invoking domination and violence, at least according to Foucault (Foucault 2003c, 111). He was not alone in this, with Butler—at least to a degree—discussing various types of violence throughout her oeuvre, such as "textual violence" (2010, 171-72), "material violence" (1995, 52), "physical" and "linguistic" violence (1997a, 4-5), and "State" violence (1997a, 54).

This complexity is drawn out with a turn towards forms of power and *dispositifs*. For instance, governmentality gives rise to legitimate and justified “State” violence (Butler 1997a; Schippers 2014; Tadros 1998), which in turn interpellates non-State violence as terrorism. Not only is there a basic distinction of violence at play here (justified and unjustified acts of violence), but a second-order dilemma takes place where accusing someone of “terrorism” leads to further acts of political violence.^{xiv} If one implores the realm of biopower, one perceives a very different system of violence taking place. Commenting on the genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia, Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg (2014) note the dangers of biopolitical violence: “These outbreaks of murderous state violence and racism, the examples of which have continued to multiply, confirm the danger that Foucault saw ensconced within the *dispositif* of biopolitics” (343).^{xv} A very different set of mechanisms and techniques are at play that are not reducible to either “normative violence” nor a division between “physical” and “linguistic” violence, such that violence and its exercise is firmly routed in its rationale and force relations, which are themselves contingent and historical. In regards to genocide, it is not the massacres some have faced through Nation-Building and territorial expansion, but rather a cleansing of the society to make way for a healthier, stronger population (e.g., Nazi Germany, Rwanda’s Tutsi population or ethnic extermination in the Balkans during the 1990s). Thus, violences and their functioning depend on the power relations in which they are not only enmeshed but which give rise to violence itself.

What this does is call for a plethora of violences, not a unitary theory; what is required is not a *theory* of violence, but an “Analytics of Violence.” While a genealogy of power relations and *dispositifs* based on a performative subject existing within a process ontology may be able to situate and make intelligible the subject and its identity, it fails to fully capture the driving forces behind the identity that work on suturing the psyche together and, in turn, tearing it apart. My project to this point has worked on laying out a framework to address

the context of the subject and the network of force relations by which it exists and gives it meaning, which has included the investigation of historical constitution and circumstances to account for the social structures in which the subject finds itself. While this can certainly be seen as a way to empower minorities by setting up a path to strategize resistances to forms of violence to make their lives more livable and less discriminatory (Flyvbjerg 1998, 224), it is also a way to more wholly understand the subject who is involved in a system that always permits and perpetrates violence, whether one's position is as perpetrator or perpetrated. According to Butler's and Foucault's philosophy, the subject is not only a "collective" one, but it relies on that collectivity to exist at all; in a Hegelian way, Butler connects this to how the subject is always attached to violence, and in that violence the subject is able to discover itself and its existence: "The 'we' is reflected back to themselves in an objective mode through the 'scars' (*blessures*) and the 'chains' (*fers*) of our victims" (Butler 2015, 178). In the same essay, Butler makes a very Foucauldian claim that violence can never be owned, but only exercised; along with this, the exercise—or one could say justification—of violence is always dependent upon one's social position (*ibid.*, 184). This cycle of performing or receiving acts of violence, whether one endorses it or not (Butler 2015; Žižek 2008), is essential to explaining the existence and becoming of the subject, as it is through such violences that the subject is greeted upon entry into existence and the state in which the subject remains as an agent of violence in some way or another; for some, as seen in the previous two sections, this becomes a pivotal investigation to resist social erasure (livability). This works on the binaries of abjection/passionate attachments and domination/resistance. While the subject must abject to retain its passionate attachment to its identity, this relies on a deferral that is open to alterity, thus the subject never fully abjects nor fully attaches, but infinitely exists somewhere between. In much the same way, one is involved in states of domination while also acting through states of resistance, stretched across any culture of power

relations, endorsing and allocating some relations while foregoing and restricting others. Along these axes, in the synthesis of these two theories, one finds the subject. To fully comprehend the stakes and investments of power/identity, an “Analytics of Violence” becomes a central necessity.

(5.5) Conclusion: From Defensive to Offensive

Violence gives rise to the subject through an original interpellation. The subject is produced by a system that passionately attaches identifiers together to give rise to the subject, which the subject clings to in order to repudiate its own erasure from social intelligibility. The only way for it to continue to cling to this identifier, though, is a repetition of abjection that works through power relations to relay forms of domination or strengthen vectors of resistance. In the process, violence is accentuated in the existence of the subject, and to think of the subject without violence is to subtract the driving force of subjection. Discussing the terms of colonization, Butler enunciates—in metaphorical terms, as she often does—that domination does not only ensure the continued existence of the “Master” and “Slave” (in her Hegelian terminology), but the violence situates what it means to be a subject—whether colonizer or colonized: “The scars and chains of the colonized here brought to light reflect back the colonizer to himself, and in this they become instrumental to the European task of self-knowledge” (2015, 178). In a globalizing world, the reach of violence is able to encompass vast swaths of individuals across the globe from the comfort of a computer screen. With a generation concentrating on human rights, identity politics, democratic theory and technological advances, what is becoming of violent acts, conscientiously or otherwise, becomes an increasingly vital inquiry to be performed.

The purpose of supplementing the “Valuing Freedom” argument has much to do with the issues discussed in this chapter. Oftentimes, the ones advocating such an approach are those who have access to democratic institutions and academic resources, perpetuating the idea of progress and the

democratization of politics; this ignores the needs of those who do not have such access, the ones most in need of the capabilities of the philosophy of identity and agency while simultaneously imposing a liberalized identity onto them through interpellative tactics. In reality, there has been a drop in free speech (Banisar 2008; Committee on Cross-Border Flow of Internet Traffic and Freedom 2015) and a rise in authoritative governments (Weeks 2014). How to combat such authoritative discourse becomes the groundwork of democratic theory if it is not to become a hypocritical and elitist enterprise, i.e., “the terrorists of theory” (Foucault 2001b, 107). The call for an “Analytics of Violence” works on two levels: (1) it urges a better understanding of the subject by not foreclosing certain facets of its construction, and (2) it seeks to enhance strategy-making abilities through this understanding to dissolve domineering force relations. I end this section with a quote from Foucault that captures the desire behind this project:

How does one keep from being fascist, even (especially) when one believes oneself to be a revolutionary militant? How do we rid our speech and our acts, our hearts and our pleasures, of fascism? How do we ferret out the fascism that is ingrained in our behavior? (Foucault 2001b, 108)

CHAPTER 6

A CONCLUSION: NOW WHERE?

As I began my research on the topic of violence, I quickly found the substance of violence, the definition itself, dissolve and slip through my fingers, coming to the realization that my approach to the issue was erroneous and my methodology was insufficient to analyze this bizarre phenomenon. What was needed was a rethinking of the analytic procedure from the bottom up. In a way, this has been a project in reverse, one that commenced at the end and concluded at the beginning. My presentation of the ideas throughout this work should be seen as a preliminary, provoking sketch in contrast to a voluminous finality into the investigation of the subject and its constitution, durability and violence(s). For this, Butler and Foucault have been deliberated on to further comprehend the stakes in undergoing the methodology of subject formation and networks of power by means of a historical genealogy. Such a large-scale operation requires working from two sides: on the one hand, you have the structural terminology and concepts formulated by Foucault to discuss the historically implemented fibers of force relations that have culminated in the present, and on the other hand you have the Butlerian reliance on subjective psyches to ensure stability and continuation of these forces coherently over time. These two styles work cooperatively as a contrivance working towards a singular end of mapping out subjective existence/experience and de-domineering strategizing. It is only once such a project has been enunciated that one can begin to turn to the complicated and messy dilemmas that “violence” poses.

Initiating with Foucault, the logic behind power was found to be in its exercise and not an intrinsic, positivistic quality; this relayed to the subject itself, which works relationally within webs of force relations to relay the techniques that have been historically deployed to both constitute and enable the subject to exist in a given way. The means to delineate power relations and make them more comprehensible was a genealogical scope that aimed to show the intentions and repercussions behind sets of relations that sedimented over time in various institutions and rationalities, making the subject a produced, discursive phenomenon that is responsible for the upkeep of power (as it cannot exist otherwise). Butler saw the flaws in such a theory lacking an account of agency and the subject and worked to elaborate on the constructive processes by which the subject comes to appear “innate” or “*a priori*.” From such a stance, she illuminates a process ontology by which the subject constantly lives through a temporal lens of citing past sedimentations in the present to defer their existence to future instances. The consequence of this is a socially constructed psyche—the temporally extending “I”—that both obtains its existence from power but also is the one who gives meaning and durability to those same force relations that constituted it.

At the same time, reconciling Foucault and Butler is not such a cut and dry process and requires compromises from both. Foucault’s antisubjectivist tone makes an account of the subject a necessity if he wants to resist interpretations of voluntarism and determinism. While he does discuss the influences of power relations and the clustering of certain relations into specific rationalities and types of power, he fails to sufficiently explain the role the subject plays in all of this. In stark contrast, Butler concentrates explicitly on the subject and often overlooks the historical-situatedness in which it exists, causing her to bar certain psychoanalytic tools from genealogical investigation. While she institutes a reassuring understanding of the capacities of the subject that is always confined by the limits of discourse and socially sanctioned actions, she fails to incorporate

the development of these tools; in the end, this causes her to resort to an essentialist understanding of the subject through a restrictive reading of productive power that has an internal contradiction because of its inability to explain the production of repressive and restrictive mechanisms. By sacrificing some of the stringency conveyed in both philosophers, one can construct a very concise, contextualizing methodology that is able to give enough substance to rationalities, concepts and objects while acknowledging their discursive existence within a relational network of forces.

In this Butler-Foucault framework, it becomes possible to pragmatically assess the violence that contributes to subject-formation and subject-durability responsible for the relay and generation of power. As was shown in chapter five, subjects are neither constituted nor constructed unilaterally but depend on contextual analysis to understand their existence and capacities. In much the same way, violence is not imposed on the subject in a universalist manner but works along a variety of axes in numerous ways to relationally situate the subject within any given structure; moreover, this violence is not a one time deal but relies on repetitive instantiations of violence to sediment subjective experiences through the closing off or opening up of certain points of expression and reception. As this is a temporal process, it means violence must be continuously enacted while also being open to altercation from within the discursive space. Mapping out this space through genealogical inquiry could lead to a better comprehension of violence in context and thus a more pragmatic ability to strategize resistance to domineering force relations and occurrences of repetitive, subject-defining violence.

The question then shifts from asking “What is violence?” to “How does violence exist?” The question of violence becomes predominantly on its exercise if one wants to understand what violence *is*, as it is a temporally-defined phenomenon. The importance of an “Analytics of Violence” similar to what Foucault performed with power becomes increasingly clear, yet the agency-based

deductions Butler performed to understand the subject existing within a process ontology would help shed light on the effects and influences of the subject in regards to *forms* of violence. This would not be a conclusive investigation but one based on methodology to provide analytic tools for the theorist to investigate violence in different context to highlight the most pragmatic and feasible points of resistance, allowing theorist and activist alike to deploy this information in strategy-building tactics to de-sedimentize domineering and violent force relations and open up a social space that still inherently propels itself via violence but allows the subject to curb various violences and have more control over them.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

ⁱ This section is commonly misconstrued by English audiences as Foucault's own understanding of power. This is partly due to an inability or difficulty in translating the French subjunctive.

ⁱⁱ While many have argued that Foucault does in fact posit a theory of power (e.g., Rozmarin 2005; Lynch 2011; Brenner 1994), this position ignores the overall project of Foucault's work, as well as the important conclusions of contextualism implicit in his writings (discussed later in this chapter).

ⁱⁱⁱ In French, Foucault refers to power as *le pouvoir* in contrast to *la puissance*. While both words translate as power, the prior, Ellen K. Feder (2011) notes, "is also the infinitive form of the verb meaning 'to be able to,' and is the most common way of saying 'can' in Romance languages" (55).

^{iv} Kelly's Nietzschean reading of Foucault leads him to the conclusion that subjects are "made from the animal existence and drives that precede the existence of the individual," (96) thus terming Foucault a "realist" rather than a nominalist (2009, 86). The problem with this interpretation is that it dismisses much of the discursive account of material Foucault gives, which runs much closer to Heidegger than Nietzsche (McWhorter 2003; Rayner 2010).

^v Somewhat ironically, *Discipline and Punish* and its notion of disciplinary power was so influential in the humanities, especially identity politics, that it often overshadowed Foucault's other theories and promoted a misrepresentation of his philosophy in general.

^{vi} Foucault's notorious example goes after the almost unchallenged belief in the liberalism of Enlightenment thought and the rights of the individual; a challenge is put to this idea at the end of *The Order of Things* to show that the individual is a historically constructed social identity, and not inherent to the subject itself. John S. Ransom (1997) argues that a consequence of Enlightenment ideals has been the assumption that all individuals are created equally, which is often written into constitutions, but congruously asserts the assumption that all individuals are on an equal intellectual and monetary playing field (13); this is the argument often used against reparations and multiculturalism.

^{vii} Foucault even terms genealogy as "effective history" in his essay on Nietzsche (Foucault 2003a) as well as his lectures on Nietzsche in Rio de Janeiro (Foucault 2001b).

^{viii} Traditionally, philosophical and political projects have sought to understand *what* power is through definitive tactics. Foucault's "*how*" can be viewed not only as a logical conclusion of Foucault's analytics of power, in that power relations are formed in context and thus historically situate our frames of reference and knowledge, but also to the extent of Foucault's primary focus on how the subject comes to be constituted.

^{ix} The famous example often used in political theory is Foucault's work presented via lectures and collected in *Security, Territory, Population*; Foucault (2007) discusses how the Nation State, intended to be secular and democratic, absorbed many of its mechanisms from the Catholic Church (e.g., confession) and monarchical institutions (e.g., the *rights* of the individual). The result was governance highly reliant on these previous institutions.

^x Geoff Danaher, Tony Schirato and Jen Webb (2000), erroneously, goes so far as to claim that "we are in a sense partly free to shop around for what we will believe or accept" (78-79), and Jon Simons (1995) complains that Foucault's notion of resistance, when used generally, "would be directed against all truth without being able to affirm truths of its own" (45).

^{xi} Moreover, these are not simply fluffy ideas for mental stimulation that can be easily thrown off once revealed, as Rozmarin defends: "The individual is not a passive function of power relations but a real, living combination of effects and possibilities" (2005, 3). This corresponds well to Foucault's own understanding of materiality and existence: "Nothing is more material, physical, corporal than the exercise of power" (Foucault 1980a, 58).

^{xii} Some have argued Foucault is too deterministic, yet this account seems to rebuke this line of criticism. It has additionally been asserted that Foucault presents "antisciences" (Habermas 1994) that would replace contemporary normative frames of reference or do away with them altogether, but Foucault is arguing that the subject exists already within a normative framework that is inescapable. Analyzing power relations prevents the solidification of dominant forms of power, seen in such places as Nazi Germany or the situation of Native Americans in the U.S., working to desolidify the domineering forces already in place.

^{xiii} This strand of thought can be seen as a continuation of the project set out by twentieth century phenomenologists, such as Heidegger, and existentialists, such as Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir.

^{xiv} This conclusion is drawn from Foucault's work surrounding the release of *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality: Vol. I*, the latter of which deals more coherently with the phenomena of power relations and *dispositifs* directly, and his *Collège de France* lectures in the late 1970s, all of which marked a move beyond a mere analysis of discourse found in his work prior to this period and invested more into procedural, geographical and institutional practices.

^{xv} Even genealogy itself is not ahistorical, and it relies heavily on a society that values and documents history in the ways Western cultures have come to do; if history was a less authoritative discipline or Foucault's position as a distinguished lecturer did not grant him access to the vaults of documents he passed through, genealogy would not function in the manner it does nor with the force it has attained in philosophy and the social sciences in general.

^{xvi} Joel Whitebook (2005) chalks this up to Foucault's dislike of psychiatric institutions throughout his life, seeing Freud as a rival and the desire to avoid a hermeneutical turn towards an "inner" self" (314). Yet, finding the reason still does not answer how to account for the source of a mental order on a non-material—or at least a brute-material—basis.

CHAPTER 2

ⁱ Butler is also making a critical point against Foucault in this argument; the instantiation of the psychic being, or subject, that exists within a system that both constitutes and shapes the subject psychically is something Foucault avoids (Butler 1997b, 2).

ⁱⁱ The understanding of a "constituted outside" comes from Derrida (1978) and is employed by many theorists working in identity politics (e.g., Bowman 2007; Laclau 2007). For instance, if apples were the only sustenance for human beings, there would be no need for the word "apple"—it would just be called "food," which gets its meaning from differentiation as well, e.g., not a liquid, not inedible, etc.

ⁱⁱⁱ Butler's system in fact implies that a normative foundation is always in place (Butler 1997b, 90). This misunderstanding is typically due to the assumption that Butler is laying out an ethics of prescription, when in reality Butler attempts to establish a descriptive account of agency and ontology (Butler 2010, xxii).

^{iv} Race is a fairly new conception, and the categorical system that arose from it shaped both the physical and social sciences of the nineteenth century, with repercussions persisting to date. Another example of this is circumcision in the U.S., where almost all boys are circumcised because it is thought to be "normal"; really, it was a social imposition dating less than one hundred years and is linked to the regulation of sexual misconduct (Waldeck 2003).

^v This procedural deferment also consists in the fact that nothing is put forward *ex nihilo*—as in Foucault—but repeats acts in a manner previously available to create something "new" (Butler 2011, 167).

^{vi} Butler's approach can be considered no more radical than Kant's differentiation between noumena and phenomena. The argument is that the subject categorizes

and signifies the world based on its historical experiences. Butler is not rejecting a *materiality-in-itself* (Rattansi 1995; Chambers and Carver 2008), but rather, “It’s just that the human condition bars access to it” (Kirby 2006, 68). This should not be interpreted as a “labeling” of brute matter differently, but the relations through which the subject comes to know its world, which is a world of signification and not matter, by means of the grid of intelligibility, not by the brute matter itself. On this point, Butler’s point can be clarified from an example exhibited by Wittgenstein (1961): “A characteristic example for my theory of the significance of descriptions in physics: The two theories of heat; heat conceived at one time as a stuff, at another time as a movement” (37e).

^{vii} Naomi Zack (2005) tries to overcome this within a normative theory by creating a contingent identification of categories by which one can add disjuncts to accumulate into a unitary identity; however, no matter how many disjunctive identifiers you add to the category, a constitutive outside will always be present.

^{viii} This also overlooks the importance of shopping centers in Western cultures, as well as the implicit economic relations and familial values that contribute to the importance placed on clothing to define who one is.

^{ix} This interrogative technique has been critically received by many, such as Kristin Waters (1996) who blasts postmodernists for breaking up the identity of minorities while indirectly reestablishing the universality of “Men,” in addition to completely neglecting normative claims. However, Butler herself acknowledges the necessity for accepting certain “banal facts” to have a livable, functional life—“This does not mean that I am unwilling to take certain notions for granted in order to proceed with an analysis” (Butler, CHU, 269)—as well as her goal of problematization, which is not synonymous with extermination—“To call a preposition into question is not the same as doing away with it...A loss of certainty is not the same as political nihilism” (Butler, BTM, 6).

^x This is not merely a linguistic idealism, but has very real, very corporeal effects with a list of martyrs, exiles, detainees, prisoners, abuse victims and oppressed minorities to show for it.

^{xi} Laclau (2000a) explains that voluntarism, or what he terms “decisionism,” rests on the conclusion that the subject is not a free-floating, transcendental (id)entity, but instead is always tied and constricted by its past.

^{xii} This is in line with Foucault understanding of power as nonsubjective; the “power” is derived from the social system in which the “law” is embroiled, but this is always intentional and never possessive.

^{xiii} However, even with all of this in mind, Butler tends to work in linguistic terms, equating “discourse” and “language” at times (Butler 2010, 54) and in other places using “language” for speech (Butler 1997a, 3), shedding light on a lack of interest in what Foucault called “nondiscursive” practices. This furthermore highlights the plights of theorists/activists, such as Barbara Christian

who explains the difficulty of living with an identity linked to non-traditional linguistic practices, e.g., “stories,” “riddles” or “proverbs” (1996, 312).

^{xiv} There is not room to get into the depth of Butler’s analysis and genealogy of psychoanalysis in this section, which has been dealt with elsewhere (Lloyd 2007; Grosz 1994; Kirby 1997), so this discussion is restricted to the essentials that help explain Butler’s position.

^{xv} This stance has been posed as the enemy of feminism because of its destructive initiative of “women” (Bodribe 1996); however, Butler and Foucault do not seek to overturn established orders to be replaced with nihilism or lack; they describe the situation underlying our existence. Roland Faber (2011) elucidates, “The genealogical ‘method’ does not destroy *what is* (the being of the subject), but it deconstructs it in *how it comes to be* (the becoming of subjection)” (21).

^{xvi} One can see this in the example of Rosa Parks, a Black woman in the US who refused to give up her bus seat to a Caucasian man during the Civil Rights Movement. She defied social norms via subversive repetition (she said “no” in a situation others typically said “yes”), inciting the Montgomery Bus Boycott, but she was also arrested as a result of her insubordination. This removed sovereignty from both Rosa Parks *and* her Caucasian accuser as neither of them had control over the effects of their actions.

^{xvii} One line of criticism has been the mind-body distinction Butler wishes to dispel, most famously presented by Pheng Cheah (1996) who argues non-linguistic matter cannot exist for Butler because it would entail a prediscursive subject; however, Butler is not saying non-linguistic entities do not exist, but they always come to us through discourse; the “subject” itself is a historical word (Butler 2010, 155). Toril Moi (2005) argues that by deconstructing binaries related to sex/gender can only fend off biological determinism, yet this is only one of the “oppressive generalizations about sexual difference” (108); Butler’s Foucauldian understanding of discourse multiplicity is a protective shell against this criticism.

^{xviii} For starters, there is an ambiguity in Foucault’s writing between bodies (material) and power such that the reader is unable to discern which is active and which is passive; for Butler, it is the occurrence of subjectivation that makes the subject both the active establisher and passive beneficiary of power (Wyk 2011, 92). Secondly, Butler criticizes Foucault for shying away from a description of the psyche: “Power is the double valence of subordinating and producing remains unexplored” (Butler 1997b, 2).

^{xix} In her post-2000 writings, Butler does address other forms of power such as governmentality and biopower (2004a), but these writings range from misinterpretations to very biased launches on contemporary events.

^{xx} I do not believe it is fair to criticize Butler for ignoring contextualization across the board, especially when she deals with specific issues (e.g., intersex children,

the Israel-Palestine conflict, gender discrimination), but she does require a stronger historicity for contextualization in addition to addressing her drift away from context when discussing psychoanalysis.

^{xxi} This tension has been laid out in depth by McNay (2000) who explains that constructivists are critical of psychoanalysis because its universalizing assumptions of subjectivity “forecloses an adequate understanding of the social and cultural variability of agency” while psychoanalyticians lean away from constructivism because its generalizing of such concepts as “internalization” and “normalization” “efface the instabilities and complexities inherent to the process of subject formation” (119).

^{xxii} As a caveat, I believe Butler’s psychoanalytic influences are essential to establishing her theory as a pragmatic tool for social transformation with a Foucauldian attitude and dexterity.

^{xxiii} In regards to the first point, one can see this in the context of transsexuals forcing a (re)discussion on the meanings of “women” and “men.” To the second point, the uproar of Syrian refugees into Europe has caused the continent to rethink its liberal ethics, or at least to come face to face with its implications, with many countries now electing conservative or nationalistic parties into power.

^{xxiv} Salih (2002) understands passionate attachments in relation to Lacan: “Since there can be no social identity without subjection, Butler argues that the subject is passionately attached to the law or authority that subjects it” (119). I am highly skeptical of this reading as it explains the attachment from the subject who profits from subjection (typically vanguarded as heterosexual white men), but less so from the subject who does not; poor Republicans in the U.S., whose attachment to religion and nationality often *trumps* commitments to economic equality demonstrate this. Moreover, Butler’s understanding of passionate attachments is more subtle, but with stronger consequences for identity.

^{xxv} This can be seen as a move away from Foucault and towards Nietzsche, striking a resemblance to Wendy Brown’s (1995) “injurious states,” by resorting to an account of “Desire” parallel to the role of the Nietzschean will. Before these two are conflated, however, this parallel should not be seen as an equation; Butler’s “Desire” is more concrete than Nietzsche’s transcendental-esque will in that it understands the subject as a goal-oriented being. This also explains why she resorts, in this section, to “guilt” imposed by the law, one where the subject always appears guilty in relation to the innocence of the “Law”: “An original guilt that the law promises to assuage through the conferral of identity” (Butler 1997b, 109).

CHAPTER 3

ⁱ For more on the relation between norms, the psyche and performance, see McIvor (2012), Lloyd (2007), Chambers and Carver (2008) and Ehlers (2008).

ⁱⁱ A resemblance can be seen here between Butler's thought and Iris Young's (2005) theory of "process metaphysics"; in this scenario, objects and identifiers are not seen as solid but as fluid.

ⁱⁱⁱ This is the point typically causing friction with theories of communicative action and discourse ethics (Habermas 1990; Benhabib 1986; Honneth 1994; Schutz 2004); however, many theorists (Feder 2011; Danaher et al. 2000; Sovaia 2012; Tully 1999) have explained the potential and/or necessity of nonautonomous action and speech.

^{iv} One could make the argument that "grids of intelligibility" are the placeholders of *dispositifs* in Butler's philosophy; however, grids of intelligibility pertain, in Butler's thought, to what the subject already unconsciously does and does not concern how to discern and map out these grids: "This signifying practice effects a social space for and of the body within certain regulatory grids of intelligibility" (Butler 2010, 178). Moreover, they are concerned with the contemporary deployment of discourses and not the historical instantiations, and thereby the historical intentionality involved in, these practices.

^v An instance of Butler equating language and discourse occurs throughout *Bodies That Matter*: "Language and materiality are not opposed, for language both is and refers to that which is material, and what is material never fully escapes from the process by which it is signified" (Butler 2010, 38). In this example, "Language" hold the place of discourse which signifies "matter," or rather the signification is "matter," i.e., there is no object behind the referent. However, her next book, *Excitable Speech*, takes a very different tone wherein "Language" at times refers to discourse (e.g., "Language is a name for our doing: both 'what' we do (the name for the action that we characteristically perform) and that which we effect, the act and its consequences)" [Butler 1997a, 8]) and at other times connotes merely speech (e.g., "To understand this sense of responsibility, one afflicted with impurity from the start, requires that we understand the speaker as formed in the language that he or she also uses. This paradox intimates an ethical dilemma brewing at the inception of speech" [Butler 1997a, 28]).

^{vi} For more on this discussion, see Driver (2001), Kelly (2009), McWhorter (2004) and McNay (2000).

vii Repeatedly while discussing Foucault, Butler interprets him as asserting prediscursive bodies that are then signified by power, making power active and bodies passive; for example, she writes, “If power acts on a subject, then it seems as if the subject is there to be acted on prior to the acting of power. But if power produces a subject, then it seems that the production that power performs is the mechanism by which the subject comes into being” (2004, 189).

viii While Butler is able to speak of the production of the subject, the *manner(s)* in which it comes into existence through repetition, citation, deferral, abjection, etc., requires *dispositifs* to explain the impact of discursive and nondiscursive practices (power) on subjectification. This is discussed further in the following section, but it is important to demonstrate Butler’s value to this process: Deferral.

ix At one point, he explicitly stated that structures of power would continue as long as individuals “decide to be its voluntary actors” (Foucault 2003e, 45). While some (e.g., Habermas 1994) have questioned Foucault on whether the subject should simply exchange their power relations for others, Butler is able to answer this through a process ontology founded on regulation and reenactment.

x This could be a result of his dislike of polemics (Foucault 2003d) or his shaky relationship with *the* philosopher of difference, Jacques Derrida (Miller 1993). This is not to say he rejects and ignores difference on all accounts, but he limits it to rather condensed conversations and circumstances (1980b; 1989; 2007).

xi Clare O’Farrel (2005) keenly observes that Foucault’s intention was to dispel the “theory/practice” binary because it promotes “the idea of ‘thought’ as something divorced from action and from real material existence” (112). While this runs parallel to what Butler’s says, or even her intentions, her lack of contextuality (1997b, 2000) and her usage of psychoanalytic tools unreservedly (1997b; 2010; 2011) indicate a conflict in her work.

xii One potential cause of this neglect could be Butler’s desire to renounce the search for origins, which is a strong point in her philosophy, but there must be a distinction between universal “origins” and historical impositions that have a historically-locatable existence. In one lecture, Butler herself backs an analysis of power relations to discover “the breaking point, the moments of discontinuities, the sides where it fails to constitute the intelligibility it promises,” but without Foucault’s “historical awareness,” i.e., an understanding of ourselves as not only *socially* situated but also *historically* situated, this ambition is difficultly, if not impossibly, earned (2003, 12).

xiii This does not require Butler herself to perform this historical inquiry (not everyone needs to be as obsessed with history as Foucault), but she does need to open her theory up to such a project. At the moment, many of her psychoanalytic influences prevent this, which is discussed later in this section.

^{xiv} Lloyd writes, “The deployment of certain signs by gay (white) men may be read by others, particularly black gay others, in [a] way different to that intended and may, additionally, provoke all kinds of inadvertent and deeply troubling effects...Indeed, it may only be in retrospect and with the aid of genealogical analysis of the kind outlined in the last chapter that it is possible to gauge how effective an intervention or an expropriative reinscription has been.” (2005, 144)

^{xv} One example is Butler placing self-reflexivity as a basis of subjectivity in *The Psychic Life of Power*. By giving too much ground to psychoanalysis, she overlooks the historical deployment of our “faculties”; she fails to acknowledge the relationship between *how* we come to shape our world and *how* self-reflexivity is established. Explaining the subject as a process of becoming, she narrows in on the “becoming” and typically excludes the “process”: “The *making* of a subject...is a kind of power that not only unilaterally *acts on* a given individual as a form of domination, but also *activates* or forms the subject” (1997b, 84). This is not to say prohibition does not come into play, but it is always in a contingent, historically situated sense (Sheridan 2005; Brenner 1994).

^{xvi} Not only is this an odd assertion, as she criticizes Julia Kristeva for doing just this (Butler 2010, 126), but it also is highly grounded in Foucault’s disciplinary power, which is itself a contingent structure of power (Best 2005; Feder 2007, 2011; Heyes 2011).

^{xvii} What separates Foucauldian disciplinary power from Butler’s take on it is that Foucault asserts that the restricting mechanisms are historically constructed due to an “*urgent need*” (Foucault 1980b, 195) while Butler posits them as ahistorical restrictions (Butler 2004, 186).

^{xviii} For Foucault on disciplinary power, see Foucault (1995, 2001, 2003a). For more on disciplinary power, see Driver (2001), Ehlers (2008), Prozorov (2007) and Ransom (1997).

^{xix} For Foucault on governmentality, see Foucault (1990, 2003b, 2007). For more on governmentality, see Curtis (2002), Deacon (1998), Oksala (2013) and Tadros (1998).

^{xx} For Foucault on biopower, see Foucault (1990, 2003c). For more on biopower, see Feder (2007), McWhorter (2004), Oksala (2013), Sacchi (2011) and Stone (2013).

^{xxi} I believe this argument is important in its own right, but I additionally wish to give an alternate line of reasoning to support it. For more on this argument, see Lloyd (2007), Oksala (2005), Simons (1995), and Young (2005).

CHAPTER 4

ⁱ These critiques of theoretical exclusion have come from many directions, often well founded, and have taken aim at Butler and Foucault (Christian 1996; Moi 1985; Puigvert 2004).

ⁱⁱ The typical example in gender studies is the heterosexual man who, by abjecting his homosexuality so as to internalize a heteronormative “Law,” passionately attaches to his heterosexual identifier; in this example, the man’s homosexuality is foreclosed, or barred from the his intelligibility.

ⁱⁱⁱ Race as a social construct is not unique to Butler—or Foucault for that matter—but has become a commonly accepted way of thinking about race as a regulatory device of subjectivity (Brush 2001; McWhorter 2004; Omi and Winant 1994; Zack 2004). One consequence of this is the idea of “women” as a non-unified category but requires some form of social exclusion (Butler 2010, 4).

^{iv} Consider the interpellation of “Female Blackness”; this interpellation is not employed in discourse—and some would argue is erroneous; this formula is inverted as a way of providing dominance to sexuality in this equation.

^v According to Butler’s story, race is implemented through mechanisms aimed at shaping the individual, which show a stronger resemblance to disciplinary power than ahistorical phenomenon of subject formation.

^{vi} This came to the forefront during the Reagan administration (1980-88) and persists into present day; this was enhanced by the discussion of Black men as “super predators.”

^{vii} The psyche hangs in the balance of social institutions (both discursive and nondiscursive) to the extent that it becomes morphed into the walls of these institutions. Many of our *dispositifs*, such as the prison and the hospital, have been built with the bodies of socially abjected subjects. Additionally, race does not work only through a foreclosure, but it is produced and invested in actual, “nondiscursive” institutions (Gabaccia 1998; Schiele 2005; Windsor et al 2010).

^{viii} Even the simple occurrence of language accusation can be shown to have troubling, violent effects for the subject falling outside the “norm.” For the (White) subject in the U.S., disciplinary tactics work on imposing an “appropriate” English onto the psyche, yet this tends to coincide with the sphere of biopolitics working on language normativity since “(White)” dialects are usually overtly similar. However, in “Black” linguistic communities, different dialects can arise, and a tension is put in place between disciplinary tactics deployed in schools and the normative language the subject acquires (internalizes) outside the classroom (Massey and Denton 2001).

^{ix} On this note, a biopolitical strand of thought can be seen, historically, in the argument that homosexuality is a product of “White” capitalism attempting to further disenfranchise Black masculinity (Clever 1999; Garvey 1986; Welsing 1991).

^x Black communities rely more on family and social relations than (White) communities (Brown 2005; Hawkeswood 1997; Nair & Thomas 2012; Stokes *et al.* 1996). In this respect, the potential split or separation from a community proves to be much more harmful for Black identities than other counterparts.

^{xi} For more on the discussion of rationality and its position inside historical relations of power, see Best (2005), Flyvbjerg (1998), Simons (1995) and Tully (1999).

^{xii} McCarthyism was an era in U.S. politics (1950s) started by a U.S. Senator named Joseph McCarthy. It included naming, often incorrectly, political members or citizens of belonging to the Communist Party. Building on the fears of the Red Scare, being named a communist as a result of McCarthyism could lead to the ruination of one’s career, social alienation and imprisonment. This included a practice of “black listing” individuals in various industries to prevent them from working as a coalition force.

^{xiii} Such a reading resembles a Derridean (1978) “Violence of the Letter” where violence stems from a linguistic basis.

^{xiv} Consider the case of authoritarian governments implementing terrorism laws to justify violence directed towards opposition groups, such as present day Egypt, Iran and Turkey.

^{xv} For further examples of biopower and the violences it encompasses, see Collins (2004), Ehlers (2008), Feder (2007), Massey and Denton (2001), McWhorter (2004) and Roberts (1997).

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APPENDIX A

TURKISH SUMMARY

Tezimde, Judith Butler'ın ve Michel Foucault'nun felsefelerindeki eksiklerini ve daha güçlü ve açık bir öznellik ve güç teorisi için birbirlerine ihtiyaçları olduğunu tartışacağım. Foucault gücün tarihsel açıklamasını sunar ve bununla birlikte gücün nasıl ortaya çıktığını açıklar. Foucault, gücün toplum tarafından belirlendiğini ve bu yüzden de evrensel olmadığını ifade eder fakat öznenin zihniyetini ve öznenin zamanda devam eden varlığını açıklayamaz. Sonuç olarak, Foucault'nun teorisi tamamlanmış değildir. Butler ise tam tersine bir süreç ontolojisi ortaya koyar. Süreç ontolojisi, öznenin toplumsal olarak güç tarafından nasıl belirlendiğini açıklamak için farklı konseptler kullanır. Süreç ontolojisi, anlamını edimlerden alan zamansal sürece dayanır. Butler'ın teorisinde psikanaliz kullanması, felsefesi için probleme işaret etmektedir. Psikanalizin evrensel fenomen olduğunu ifade eder fakat bu Foucault'nun gücün tarihsel anlayışına ters düşer. Bu durum, Butler'ın teorisinde bir çelişki ortaya çıkarır. Bu çelişkiyi çözmek için de Foucault'nun soykütüğü metodunu kullanır. Bu kombinasyonun neden gerekli olduğunu Amerika'daki siyah kadınlar ve siyah homoseksüel erkekler üzerinden örneklendirerek anlatacağım. Bunun ardından, tıpkı Foucault'nun gücü analiz etmek için kullandığı yöntem gibi, ben de Butler'ın ve Foucault'nun fikirlerinin kombinasyonu olan bu yeni yöntemin şiddet suçlarını analiz etmek için kullanılabileceğini açıklayacağım.

Michel Foucault, politik karışıklıklarla ve eylemlerle dolu bir İkinci Dünya Savaşı Sonrası dönemde yaşadı. Temel amaçlarından bir tanesi öznenin nasıl var olduğunu ve nereden geldiğini anlamaktı. Bu sebeple de bir güç anlayışı, soykütüğü ve *dispositifs* (güç mekanikleri) ortaya koydu. Böylece,

çağdaş dünyadaki özneyi araştırmak için yeni bir metot ortaya koyabilecekti. Bu teoride birtakım kusurlar vardı fakat son iki kitabında bu kusurları çözmeye çalıştıysa da fikirlerini henüz tamamlamadan 1984'te yaşamını kaybetti. Tezimin ilk bölümünde yukarıda bahsedilen konseptleri detaylı bir şekilde ifade edeceğim ve bunun ardından da güç anlayışındaki sorunları ortaya koyacağım. Daha sonra da bu sorunların Butler'ın felsefi teorisine dönerek çözülebileceğini ifade edeceğim.

Foucault, gücün geleneksel anlayışını reddeder. Bu geleneksel güç anlayışına, Niccolo Machiavelli'nin Prens'i ve Thomas Hobbes'un Leviathan'ı örnek olarak gösterilebilir. Foucault'ya göre, böylesi bir güç anlayışı sınırlıdır. Dahası, Foucault her türlü güç "teorisi"ni reddeder ve gücün, güç ilişkilerinin işleyişinden ibaret olduğunu ifade eder. Böylece, Foucault gücün "ne" olduğundan ziyade, "nasıl" olduğuna odaklanır. Güç, *yalnızca* kısıtlayıcı değil, aynı zamanda yaratıcıdır da. Örneğin, insan hakları toplumsal olarak belirlenmiştir ve özneye eyleme imkanı sağlarlar: ifade özgürlüğü, inanç özgürlüğü gibi. Öznenin yeteneklerini üretir. Tek bir güç değil, güç sistemlerinin çokluğudur. Bu demektir ki güç bağlamda var olur, yani tarihten bağımsız değildir. Güç aynı zamanda direnişin imkanına işaret eder. Eğer bir güç varsa, aynı zamanda bir karşı gücün imkanı da vardır. Örneğin, özne devlete karşı direnebilir fakat bunu bir vatandaş olarak yapabilir. Yani devlete karşı hareket edebilmek için devletin zihniyetini kullanır. Başka bir deyişle, direniş güce içseldir. Sonuç olarak; güç, bir şeyin ya da birinin insanların hareketlerini kontrol etmeye çalıştığı güç ilişkileridir.

Güç, tarihsel durumların sebebi değil, sonucudur, yani güç aşkınsal değildir. Güç, özneyi ve toplumu üretir, beraberinde de öznenin ve toplumun sınırlarını. Özne tarihsel güç sistemleri tarafından var olur: dilsel ifadeler ve fiziksel etkinlikler. Ek olarak, özne özerk değildir çünkü özne hiçbir zaman güce sahip olamaz ya da gücü kontrol edemez. Örneğin, kralın kendine ait bir gücü yoktur fakat toplumdaki konumundan dolayı gücü kullanır. Sonuç olarak, analiz

edilemez hiçbir *a priori* yeti yoktur. Bu aynı zamanda maddenin de güç tarafından toplumsal olarak belirlendiği anlamına gelir. Bu belirleme, söylem ve edimle gerçekleşir. Böylece, madde doğalmış gibi görülür. Foucault'nun analitik tekniğinin temelinde maddeyi anlamak vardır. Bu yöntem güç türlerini ayırt edebilecekti. Örneğin, biyogüç (popülasyonu düzenleme), yönetimsellik (yönetim sanatı), pastoral güç (rehberlik ilişkileri). Direniş güce içsel olduğundan hiçbir özne edimlerinin sonuçlarını tam olarak kontrol edemez. Bu yüzden de hiçbir güç sistemi sonlu değildir.

Soykütüğü, doğal sandığımız “gerçekler”i araştırmak ve onların tarihsel üretimini anlamak için kullanılan bir analitik araçtır. Örnek vermek gerekirse, insanlar ırkın bir hakikat olduğunu düşünürler fakat bu aslında 18. ve 19. yüzyıllarda toplum tarafından belirlenmiştir. Soykütüğü, insanların tarihsel konumunun bir resmini çizer. Bu resim, sosyal normları belirleyen bir haritaya dönüşür. Soykütüğü, “nasıl”a odaklanır: Stratejiler nasıl var oldular? Nasıl çalışırlar? Güç nasıl işler? Sonrasında, direnişi ve hakimiyet tartışacağım. Hakimiyet, değiştirilmesi zor ya da neredeyse imkansız olan güç ilişkilerini ifade eder. Diğer bir yandan, direnişe başka bir gücü engellemeye çalışan güç ilişkisini ifade eder. Direniş ve hakimiyet güce içseldirler ve özne bu ikisinin arasında belirlenir. Tarihseldirler ve tarihsel öznelere ve düşünme biçimlerine dayanırlar. Özgürlük, direnişin imkanıdır. Soykütüğü, öznenin ne kadar özgürlük sahibi olduğunu belirler. Örneğin, Mısır'ın bir önceki başkanı Hosni Mubarak'e karşı yapılan eylemler sırasında Mubarak askerlerine protesto yapan erkek eylemcileri tek gözlerinden vurmalarını emretmişti. Bunun ardındaki fikir protestocuları korkutmak ve yıldırmaktı. Diğer bir deyişle, Mubarak eylemcilerin hareketlerini kontrol etmek istemişti fakat durum tam tersiyle neticelenmiş ve daha fazla eylemci destek için protestolara katılmıştı. Bu durumda, Mısır başkanının pozisyonu hakimiyet kurmaktı fakat direniş başarılı bir şekilde Mubarak'in bu hakimiyetini sonlandırdı.

Soykütüğünün amacı, tek bir egemenlikteki güç ilişkileri grubunu ifade eden *dispositifs*'i göstermektir. Örneğin, cinsellik ve milliyet. *Dispositifs* özneyi ve öznenin eylemini çeşitli güç biçimleri dolayısıyla var eder. Dolayısıyla, varlık özü üretir. *Dispositifs*, soykütüğü teoristinın tek bir konsept içindeki farklı elementleri araştırmasına imkan sağlar. Soykütüğü aynı zamanda, *dispositifs*'in sorgulanmadan kabul edilmesini zorlaştırır. Tüm bunların yanı sıra, Foucault'nun teorisinde yine de bazı sorunlar vardır.

Foucault'ya göre, madde tarihte toplumsal olarak belirlenmiştir. Foucault, bütün aşkınsal öznellik teorilerini (örneğin; psikoanaliz, Aşkınsal İdealizm, Marksizm gibi) reddeder fakat bu durum, onu dogmatik bir materyaliste indirgeyebilir. Aynı zamanda, Foucault öznenin nasıl kendi kimliğine bağlandığına dair bir teori ortaya koymaz. Son olarak, Foucault “ayrılmış” kimlikleri tartışır fakat aşkınsal bir açıklama olmadan bu imkansız hale gelir. Örneğin, Latin bir lezbiyen ırkı ve cinselliği arasında bir seçim yapmak zorunda kalabilir. Bu sebeplerden dolayı, Foucault'nun teorisini tamamlamak için Butler'a ihtiyaç vardır.

Bu yüzden, Judith Butler'ın öznellik teorisini Foucault'un problemlerinin üstesinden gelebilmek için açıklayacağım. Butler, yeni bir Foucault değildir fakat Foucault'nun felsefesine bazı gerekli eklemeler yapar. Foucault gücün tarihini ve öznenin üretimini çalışırken Butler öznenin bir süreç ontolojisi içerisindeki oluşumunu araştırır. Butler'ın süreç ontolojisinin ilk kısmı çağırma. Çağırma, öznenin isimlendirilmesi ya da etiketlenmesidir ve bu, özneyi belirleyen şeydir. Örneğin, bir özneye “kız” dendiğinde o özneye “kız” olarak davranılır ya da bir özneye “Arap” dendiğinde o özneye “Arap” olarak davranılır. Bu durum, edimle gerçekleşir ve öznenin doğasına ait değildir. Butler, Saussure'un farklılığını kullanır. Başka bir deyişle, özne kendinde şey değildir. Özne, ilişkisel ve toplumsal olarak belirlenmiştir. Nihayetinde, evrensellik yoktur. Her bir anlam, başka bir şeyi dışlar. Etiket, güç kazanmak için sürekli tekrar eder. Bu durum,

ritüel ve geleneklerle gerçekleşir. Sonuç olarak, özne hiçbir zaman izolasyon içinde var olmaz, aksine var olmak için başka öznelere ihtiyaç duyar. Buna ek olarak, özne hiçbir zaman *tamamlanmış* değildir, her zaman bir *oluş* içindedir.

Demektir ki özne statik değil, edimseldir. Gelenekler zaman içinde çok kez tekrar edildiğinde, doğal hale gelirler. Daha doğrusu, toplumsal olarak belirlendikleri halde doğalmış gibi görünürler. Bu, Foucault'nun felsefesine benzerdir. Butler buna maddeselleştirme der. Pek çok farklı norm tek bir öznde bir araya geldiğinde bir söylem oluştururlar. Söylemler tekrarın sebepleri değil, sonuçlarıdır. Yani, söylemler güçlerini doğallaştırılmış ve toplumsal olarak belirlenmiş normlardan alırlar. Toplum ve toplumdaki güç ilişkileri pek çok söylem tarafından belirlenir ve bu, edimsel bir süreçtir. Özne, tarihsel olarak belirlenmiş normlara şimdide eyleyerek referans verir ve böylece, onları gelecekte de kullanabilir. Onları gelecekte de kullanmak için gerçekleştirilen bu normları tekrarlama sürecine erteleme denir. Bu da demektir ki toplumsal normlar doğal değildirler ve yanlış biçimde tekrar edildiklerinde değiştirilebilirler.

Butler'ın madde fikri bu fikre dayanır. Madde, Kantçı "kendinde şey" değil, toplumsal olarak belirlenmiş bir ifadedir. "DNA" bile, ifade dolayısıyla anlam kazanır. Butler'ın süreç ontolojisinin temeli budur ve iki şeye dayanır: İlkin, özne kültür tarafından isimlendirilmelidir ve ikinci olarak da tekrar, normların anlamlarını erteleme aracılığıyla korumalıdır. Bu, Foucault ve Butler arasındaki ayrıma işaret eder. Butler öznenin tarihiyle değil, güç ilişkilerinin şimdide nasıl işlediğiyle ilgilidir. Jacques Derrida'nın da Butler'dan etkilenmesinin sebebi budur. Butler, insanlar tarafından istenççilik ve determinizmle suçlanmıştır. Kimileri, Butler'ın istenççi olduğunu çünkü ona göre öznenin normları özgürce tekrar edebildiğini savunurlar. Kimileriye Butler'ın determinist olduğunu çünkü onun öznenin normlar tarafından belirlenir olduğunu düşündüğünü savunurlar. Bu sorunu çözebilmek adına, Butler, Derrida'nın alıntılama edimini ve Jacques Lacan'ın yasasını da felsefesine dahil eder.

Derrida'nın alıntılması, öznenin edimleri doğrulamak için sosyal normları alıntılması anlamına gelir. Yani, özne özgür bir biçimde eylemez. Sosyal normları alıntılmalıdır, aksi takdirde cezalandırılacaktır. Aynı zamanda tekrar, erteleme ve alıntılama edimi olduğundan dolayı bütün normlar değiştirilebilir ya da uyarlanabilir. Dahası, alıntılama toplumsal formlara dayandığı için evrensel değil tarihseldir. Özne, bir formu yanlış bir şekilde alıntılabilir fakat bunun doğuracağı sonuçlar olacaktır. Sonuç itibariyle, Butler istenççi değildir. Diğer bir yandan da Butler, determinizmden kurtulmak için Lacan'ı kullanır. Normlar doğal hale geldiğinde bir toplumsal "yasa" meydana getirirler. Yasa, hangi edimin kabul edilebilir hangi edimin kabul edilemez olduğunu söyler. Lacan ve Butler arasında bir fark söz konusudur. Lacan, yasanın evrensel olduğuna inanır. Butler içinse yasa tarihseldir ve değişebilir. Buna ek olarak, Lacan yasanın kültürün nedeni olduğuna inanırken Butler yasanın kültürün sonucu olduğuna inanır. Yine de her ikisi de öznenin sosyal kısıtlamalar tarafından yaratıldığı düşüncesinde hemfikirdirler. Butler için yasa tarihsel olduğundan zaman içerisinde değişebilir. Aynı zamanda, özne kültür içerisinde anlaşılması gereken yasayı alıntılmalıdır. Dolayısı ile Butler determinizmden kurtulmak adına Lacan'ın yasasını kullanır. Butler ne bir istenççidir ne de bir deterministtir.

Butler'a göre özne özgürdür ama bu özgürlük kısıtlıdır. Özne eyleyebilir, konuşabilir fakat eylem ve söylemlerinin sonuçlarını kontrol edemez. Nihayetinde özne otonom değildir ve var olması için başka öznelere ihtiyaç duyar. Foucault da Butler'ı yoğun bir şekilde etkilemiştir. Lacan'a göre yalnızca bir tane yasa vardır, oysa Butler pek çok yasa olduğu konusunda Foucault'ya katılır. Üstelik, direnç güce içseldir. Sonuç olarak da özne yasayı değiştirmek için yasayı kullanmalıdır, hiçlikten bir edim üretmez. Ek olarak, özne toplumsal olarak belirlenmiştir, yani doğal bir varlık değildir. Birey, etiklendiği zaman

özne haline gelir. Butler, Foucault'nun güç fikrine tını de ekler. Tını, öznenin akli melekeleridir ve yine toplumsal olarak belirlenmiştir. Buna aklın yetileri ve anlamı da dahildir.

Butler'ın da Foucault'un olduğu gibi özne teorisiyle ilgili bazı problemleri vardır. Foucault'ya göre pek çok farklı güç biçimi vardır. Butler ise yalnızca cezalandırıcı gücü tartışır. Foucault için cezalandırıcı güç tarihselken Butler için cezalandırıcı güç evrenseldir. Butler'a göre güç, kısıtlama aracılığıyla üretir fakat Foucault'ya göre güç aynı zamanda kısıtlama olmaksızın da üretebilir. Butler'ın teorisi psikoanalitik temelli bir teoridir. Bu sorunları çözmek için öznellik teorisinde daha fazla tarihe ihtiyacı vardır. Tarihsel temellendirme olmaksızın nedenselliğin hesabını vermesi mümkün değildir.

Yine de Butler, Foucault'nun teorisindeki bazı problemlere de çözüm getirir. Foucault öznenin zamansal olarak nasıl var olduğunu açıklayamaz. Diğer bir deyişle Foucault öznenin sürecinin hesabını veremez. Butler bunu açıklamak için iki farklı konsept ortaya koyar: reddetme ve tutkulu bağlılık. Öncelikli olarak reddetmeyle başlayacağım. Butler açısından reddetme kavramı, anlamın dışlamayla yaratıldığı fikriyle ilişkilidir. Bu demektir ki bir şeyin ya da kimsenin bir kimliğinin olabilmesi için özne tarafından dışlanması gerekir. Örneğin, bir erkek maskülen olmak için feminen nesnelere ve fikirleri reddetmelidir. Bu eylemleri çokça defa tekrarladıktan sonra özne bu fikirleri içselleştirir. Ek olarak, özne aynı zamanda kimliğini muhafaza etmek ister. Bir kimlik olmaksızın özne kültür tarafından anlaşılabilir ve dolayısıyla o öznenin varlığını reddeder. Sonuç olarak özne tutkulu bir bağlılık ortaya koyar. Bu, kimliğine yönelik güçlü bir bağlılıktır. Bu güçlü bağlılığa örnek olarak milliyetçilik verilebilir. Özne, kimliğini her türlü zarara karşı koruyacak ve savunacaktır. Böylece özne kendi statüsünü muhafaza edebilir. Dahası, reddetme ve tutkulu bağlılık birbirlerine dayanırlar.

Her ne kadar Butler Foucault'nun bazı sorunlarına çözüm üretebilse de kendi teorisinin içerisinde birtakım problemler söz konusudur. İlk, Butler'ın öznellik teorisine tarihi yedirmemiştir ve bu yüzden de hükmetmeyle savaşmak adına pratiğe yönelik herhangi bir strateji geliştiremez. İkinci olarak, her ne kadar Butler gücü tartışsa da gücün işleyişini ve tekniklerini (*dispositifs*) tartışmaz. Toplumsal normları değiştirmenin imkanı olduğunu ifade eder fakat bunun yolunu ortaya koymaz. Üçüncü olarak, Butler bazen psikoanalitik temelciliğe inanır. Örneğin, öznenin var olması için yasaklamanın zorunlu olduğuna inanır fakat Foucault bu durumun tarihsel olduğunu ifade eder. Butler'ın ihtiyacı olan şey, psikoanalize teorisinde daha az yer vermektir. Son olarak da Butler tinin bir bütün olduğunu ifade eder. Oysa Foucault açısından tin bölünmüştür. Butler'ın tinin bütün olduğu fikri, bütün özneler için tek bir zihniyeti empoze eder ve çokluğu reddeder. Bu sebeplerden dolayı da Butler ve Foucault tüm bu sorunları çözebilmek adını bir araya getirilmelidirler.

Butler ve Foucault öznellik düşüncesine pek çok katkı sağlarlar. Foucault soykütüğünü, gücü ve *dispositifs*'i ve bunların tarihsel kuruluşunu açıklar fakat öznenin zaman içerisindeki süren varlığına bir açıklama getirmez. Diğer bir yandan da Butler anlamı açıklamak için edimi kullanan bir süreç ontolojisi ortaya koyar fakat teorisi Foucault'nun tarihsel içeriğinden yoksundur. Dolayısıyla daha iyi bir öznellik teorisi ortaya koyabilmek adına bu iki filozof bir araya getirilmelidir.

İlk olarak, Foucault'nun toplumsal yapı teorisi materyalizme çok yakındır. Foucault, öznenin doğasına dair olan tüm teorileri reddetmiştir. Bu da Foucault'nun aynı zamanda öznenin zihniyetine dair olan herhangi bir yapısal açıklamayı da reddettiği anlamına gelir. Butler'ın süreç ontolojisi ise tekrar, alıntılama, doğallaştırma, reddetme ve tutkulu bağlılık kavramlarını içerir. Butler'a göre, özne daima zamansal olarak var olur. Zamansallık öznenin edimine dayanır. Yani, özneye güç arasındaki ilişki zamansallıktır. Her iki filozof için de özne toplumsal olarak üretilmiştir. Foucault, öznenin *dispositifs*

dolayısıyla nasıl var olduğunu açıklar. Diğer bir yandan da Butler hiçbir zaman gücün tarihte nasıl toplumsal olarak üretildiğinin hesabını vermez. Bu sebeple de Butler'ın strateji ortaya koyabilmesi söz konusu değildir. Strateji ortaya koyulmadığı müddetçe de Butler'ın sosyal normlar teorisi bir bütün olarak bir arada bulunamaz. Tini açıklayabilmek için Butler'ın *dispositifs*'e ihtiyacı vardır. Sonuç olarak bu iki filozof daha güçlü birer tarihsel öznellik ve tarihsel tin teorileri ortaya koyabilmek için bir araya getirilebilir.

Bunlarla birlikte, Foucault gücün tarihini çalışmak için soykütüğünü kullanır. Gücün tarihini çalıştığı müddetçe toplumun her döneminin bir resmini ortaya koyabilecektir. Foucault'ya göre, tarih gücün nasıl ürettiğini ortaya koyar. Güç, öznenin yapabilirliklerini ve sınırlarını üretir. Oysa Butler gücün yalnızca sınırlamalarını tartışır. Bu sorunu çözebilmek adına, Butler Foucault'dan daha çok, psikoanalizden daha az faydalanmalıdır. Bunu iki önemli yolla yapabilir. İlkin, daha üretici bir güç anlayışını benimseyebilir. İkinci olarak da özne ve söylem arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiyi kabul edebilir. Böylece, Butler'ın psikoanalizi Foucaultcu bir *dispositifs* haline gelir. Psikoanaliz, tüm özneler için aynı biçimde ortaya çıkmaz. Örneğin, beyaz bir kişi reddetmeyi siyah bir kişiden ya da bir kadın içselleştirmeyi bir erkekten daha farklı bir biçimde deneyimlerler. Ayrıca, Butler'ın cezalandırıcı güçten daha fazlasını kullanmaya ihtiyacı vardır. Foucault'nun diğer güç tiplerini de teorisine eklemesi gerekir.

Butler'ın ve Foucault'nun felsefelerinin kombinasyonunu iki farklı vaka çalışmasıyla göstereceğim. İlk vaka çalışması Amerika'daki siyah kadınlar, ikincisiyse Amerika'daki siyah eşcinsel erkekler olmaktadır. Bu iki örneği göstermekteki amacım, ne Butler'ın ne de Foucault'nun tek başına başarılı olamayacaklarını ortaya koymaktır. Bunun yanı sıra ortaya koyduğum analizin tamamlanmış olmadığını, aynı zamanda şiddetin analizini de gerektirdiğini göstereceğim. Butler'a göre, siyah kadınlar pasif özneler değildirler, aksine toplumun aktif katılımcılarıdır. Amerika'da siyah kadınlar halen daha pek çok güçlülükle karşı karşıya gelmektedirler. İsteseler de istemeseler de siyah kadınlar

toplumda “seksi ucubeler” ve “orospular” olarak etiketlenmişlerdir. Bu durum onlar tarafından içselleştirilebilir. Aynı zamanda günlük yaşamda da Avrupalı bir ahlak anlayışıyla karşı karşıyadırlar. Böylesi bir ahlak anlayışı, onların kendi evlerinde ve kültürlerinde deneyimlediklerinden farklıdır. Butler’a göre, bu kadınlar toplumsal normları değiştirebilirler fakat bu amaçlı yapılmış pek çok girişim başarısızlıkla sonuçlanmıştır. Tarihsel açıdan, durum Amerika’daki siyah kadınlar için daha kötüye gitmiştir. Pek çok yoksul kesimde bu kadınlar kendi tercihlerini yapma haklarını kaybetmişlerdir. Yoksul topluluklarda yaşarlar, yaşadıkları bu yoksul yerleri terk edebilecekleri işler bulamazlar, çok fazla uyuşturucu ve şiddet söz konusudur. Siyahi Cemiyet’i içinde de aşağı seviyede görülürler. Televizyonda ve medyada da temsil edilmezler. Yeni fiziksel görünüm yaratmaya çalıştıklarındaysa cinsellikle ve ırkçılıkla ilgili olarak yanlış bir biçimde yargılanırlar. Peki bu durumda Butler nasıl etkili olabilir? Tahakkümle mücadele etmek için stratejiler geliştirebilmek hususunda Butler Foucault’nun tarihsel içeriğine ihtiyaç duyar. Foucault açısından ırk tarihseldir ve bunun sonuçları kolayca değiştirilebilir değildir. Foucault aynı zamanda siyah kadınların neden bu şekilde etiketlendiklerini de açıklar. Foucault’nun soykütüğüyle birlikte siyah kadınlar baskın güç ilişkilerine karşı nasıl direnebileceklerine dair stratejiler geliştirebilirler.

İkinci vakaysa Amerika’daki siyah homoseksüel erkeklerdir. Toplum tarafından pek çok ayrımcılığa maruz kalırlar. Akademik dergilerde tartışılmazlar ve beyaz homoseksüel erkeklerden daha farklı bir kimliğe sahiptirler. Siyah homoseksüel erkeklere göre sözlü şiddet, fiziksel şiddetten daha kötüdür ve toplum tarafından görünmezdirler. Hatta bazen, siyah homoseksüel erkekler başka homoseksüellere saldırırlar ve böylece de heteroseksüel imajını koruyabileceklerdir. Bu, onların homoseksüellerin sahip olmadığı birtakım toplumsal ayrıcalıklara sahip olmalarını sağlayacaktır. Siyah homoseksüeller, Siyahi Cemiyeti’nden ve Siyahi Kilisesi’nden dışlanırlar ki bu durum onların yalnız ve dışlanmış hissetmelerine yol açar. Şehirlere taşınırlar fakat ırkçı olduğu

için eşcinseller cemiyetinden uzak dururlar. Yani, ırkları ve cinsellikleri arasında süren bir çatışma haliyle yüz yüzedirler. Onların tarihsel durumu siyah kadınlardan daha farklıdır. Her ikisi de cinsel istismarı deneyimliyor olsalar da bu istismar tarih içerisinde farklı biçimlerde yaratılmıştır. Butler onların bütün bir tîne sahip olduklarını düşünürken Foucault açısından tinleri bölünmüştür. Yine de Foucault'nun öznelerin kimliklerini şimdide nasıl belirlediğini anlatabilmek için Butler'ın edimsellik teorisine ihtiyacı vardır. Yani bu iki filozof, bu durumda da birbirlerine ihtiyaç duyarlar.

Her iki vaka çalışması için de şiddet örnekleri verilmiştir. Özne daima şiddete maruz kalır ve şiddet, öznenin nasıl var olduğunu ve var olmaya nasıl devam ettiğini belirler. Şiddet bir fikir değil, edimdir. Anlamını, toplumda ortaya çıktığı anda kazanır. Böylece, Foucault'nun güç anlayışı ve Butler'ın süreç ontolojisi gibidir. Ek olarak, şiddet herkes için aynı şekilde işlemez. Şiddetin soykütüğü için Foucault'ya ve şiddetin zamanda toplumsal inşası için de Butler'a ihtiyaç vardır. Şiddetin dilinin ve fiziksel şiddetin birbirinden ayırtılamayacağını açıklayacağım. Tek bir şiddet yoktur, pek çok şiddet biçimi vardır. Aynı zamanda, şiddetin kültürden kültüre değişiklik göstereceğini tartışacağım. Şiddet, bir kültürün kullandığı zihniyetten ortaya çıkar. Bu sebeplerden ötürü de şiddetin nasıl işlediğini anlamak için şiddetin analizi gerekmektedir. Şiddeti analiz etmek için bir metot üretmek gerekmektedir. Eğer bu durum söz konusu olmazsa şiddete karşı stratejiler geliştirmek söz konusu olmayacaktır. Bu metot, şiddeti en çok deneyimleyen kişiler için oldukça büyük bir önem arz etmektedir. Çoğu kez, bu kişilerin üniversiteye ya da herhangi bir güç pozisyonuna erişim imkanları yoktur. Üniversiteler, onların varlığını yok saymaya eğilimlidirler. Bu demektir ki kendilerine yöneltilen şiddetin karşısında çok az bir güce sahiptirler. Bu, aynı zamanda felsefecilerin de öznenin inşası hususunda yeni araştırmalar yapmalarına olanak sağlar. Bireyin maruz kaldığı şiddet ve bireyin uyguladığı şiddet birbirleriyle ilişkilidir. Bu ikisi birbirlerini yaratırlar. Sömürgeci, eğer sömürebileceği biri varsa vardır. Yargıç, eğer bir

suçlu varsa vardır. Yasa, eğer bir toplum varsa vardır. Şiddeti anlamak özneyi anlamak için gereklidir. Şiddetin analizi olmaksızın kendimizi anlamamız mümkün değildir.

Bunu mümkün kılabilmek için Butler'ın ve Foucault'nun teorileri bir araya getirilmelidir. Foucault şiddeti anlamamızı sağlayan bir metot ortaya koyar. Butler ise özneyi zamansal olarak anlamamızı sağlayan bir öznellik teorisi açıklar. İki filozof da öznenin toplumsal olarak belirlendiğini ifade ederler. Bu aynı zamanda demektir ki özne ve anlam aşkınsal değildir fakat araştırmayla anlaşılabilir. Bu araştırmalar felsefecilerin direniş için stratejiler ortaya koymalarına olanak sağlar.

APPENDIX B

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü
- Enformatik Enstitüsü
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Maze
Adı : Jacob Alan
Bölümü : Felsefe

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Contextualizing Performative Identity: A Synthesis of Judith Butler's Performative Process Ontology and Michel Foucault's Analytics of Power.

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: