

Larna Pantrey-Mayer

MA Dissertation: October 2011

Is Male to Female Transsexualism Misogynistic?

An application of Judith Butler's poststructuralist argument of denaturalised sex – to the feminist view the act of male to female transsexualism is inherently misogynistic.

Brighton University: Cultural and Critical Theory (Aesthetics)

To Jon,

With all my love.

Thank you.

With special thanks to Jamie.

Thank you for all your help and never making me feel as if it was too much to ask.

Introduction	4
Chapter 1	
Understanding Judith Butler's sex and gender	15
Chapter 2	
In defence of performativity and sex as constructed	40
Chapter 3	
Transsexual misogyny and denaturalised sex	65
Conclusion	96
Bibliography	102

The aim of this dissertation is to tackle and disprove the viewpoint held by some feminist theorists that the act of male to female transsexualism is one which is inherently misogynistic.¹ It is my intention to tackle this viewpoint by applying Butler's theory of performativity and her theorisations surrounding the sex-gender dichotomy, which includes the deconstruction of the terms male and female, and man and woman. It is via performativity that I intend to expose the constructed understanding of both sex and gender. I will use the Butlerian notion of sex as constructed rather than natural to demonstrate that the transsexual form is to be analysed and understood like either of the two normative sex options (male and female); an effect of social compulsions, not an actor enacting a wilful and premeditated negative attack on femininity and womankind.

In order to understand how the transsexual can be seen to cross from one sex and gender to another (transsex), I will be required to break down the terms male and female, and to observe how Butler argues that these terms have come to bear meaning.² I will not analyse the specifics of the assumed difference between what are (arguably) the two sexes and genders.³ The differences will not be named or detailed, however an observation will be made into how a binary was formulated, which has led to the creation and normalisation of intelligible valid subjects.

The first chapter of the dissertation will be an explication of Butler's theory of performativity, and subsequently the denaturalisation of sex from the body, as expressed in her publications, *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies that Matter* (1993). For this explication to be fully effective it will require an explanation of the Foucaultian notions of discourse, truth and genealogy. An understanding of Foucaultian subject and normalisation of subjects via multifarious methods of discursive discipline is essential to understanding Butlerian theorisations regarding sex and performativity.⁴ Both Butler and Foucault argue that the subject is an effect of discourse: given meaning by cultural compulsions, conditioned by judicial power and given validity via normalisation procedures.⁵ This viewpoint – that the subject is brought into intelligible being as a result of culture – is counter to the feminist essentialist view. The essentialist definition sees the body as a pure referent.⁶ In an essentialist argument, woman is defined by self-evident irreducible facts of the female form: her sex.⁷

1 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)* Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 86

2 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 3

3 Ibid 31

4 Foucault, M. *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984. v. 3 Penguin 3 edition*. Edited by James D. Faubion. London, 2002. 81-85

5 Foucault, M. *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge: v. 1*, Penguin; New edition, London 1998. 135–159

6 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. 2

7 Ibid 3

It is in the understanding of the subject's sex where the crux of the argument lies: whether male to female transsexuality is inherently misogynistic. Both the constructivist and essentialist definition of femininity are culturally-developed. Feminists, such as Germaine Greer in *The Female Eunuch*, (1970) argued "that every girl child is conceived as a whole woman but from the time of her birth to her death she is progressively disabled"; a whole woman is a woman who resists feminisation: "a woman who did not embody male sexual fantasies or rely upon a man to endow her with identity and social status, a woman who did not have to be beautiful, who could be clever, who would grow up in authority as she aged."⁸

Greer believes that femininity has nothing at all to do with sex.⁹ Butler, and feminists who believe male to female transsexuality is misogynistic, agree femininity is a social construct. However, Butler argues that not only is gender a social construction but so too is sex. Butler argues that gender ascribes meaning to the subject's form, and as a consequence, the sex of the subject is also constructed and totally implicated with its gender.¹⁰ For Butler, there is no essential intelligible sex.¹¹ With no intelligible sex or gender existing outside of discourse there is no essentially owned female space that one is born with the right to occupy. The feminist rejection of male-to-female transsexuals is a rejection that is dependent on biology; biology is dependent upon the interpretation of its meaning. Culture dictates what means and what set of criteria prescribe the right to occupy particular categories.

The clarity of communicating the denaturalisation of sex from the body and realignment of gender as implicated, will rely upon the explanation of Butler's analysis of the de Beauvoirian idea that "one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman", which will be referenced via the French documentary, *Judith Butler* (2006).¹² The documentary features Butler explaining at length the evolution of her study into the claim made in the *Second Sex* (1949).

This explanation will require a breakdown of the claim's notion of 'becoming', which gave rise to the idea that woman never became – woman was a subject never completed. The analysis of becoming resulted in Butler's questioning of the teleology of sex – whether gender was built upon the sexed body or whether it was gender that gave cultural meaning to that physical form.¹³ Upon completion, the first chapter should demonstrate how Butler was able to effectively argue that gender is the cultural understanding of the sexed form, and that this understanding is dependent on numerous factors.

The second chapter will focus on Butlerian arguments concerning the body and its performance: the stylisation facilitating the reading of a gendered appearance. Criticisms concerning analysis and development of the performance

8 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 6

9 Ibid 87

10 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 49

11 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006 14

12 Zadjermann, P. *Judith Butler: Philosophical Encounters of the Third Kind*. (via Youtube 23.05.2011 part 2/6)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTz-_YeUIUg&feature=related : 26.06.11 – 7mins 25 secs.

13 Ibid

(femininity or masculinity) will not be responded to. The specifics of the performance – actions signifying particular gendered responses – bears no relevance to my argument and so will not be developed upon; however, the existence of the performance and its reading does. It is not the specifics which are of concern but rather the existence of the performance. The performance indicates a gendered façade. Criticisms surrounding the recognition of a stylised, performed sex and gender will be addressed, but the development of the methods for reading this performance and the significance of specific actions will not be analysed or defended.

The Butlerian defence in the second chapter will cover the following claims: both sex and gender are subject to, and constructed by, culture – paying special attention to Butler’s denaturalisation of sex from the body, and the defence of the Butlerian term performativity. This defence will begin by defining essentialism as per Diana Fuss’s definition in her publication *Essentially Speaking* (1989). Fuss argues:

...there is no essence to essentialism, that (historically, philosophically, and politically) we can only speak of *essentialisms*. Correlatively, [the book] will also make the claim that constructionism (the position that differences are constructed, not innate) really operates as a more sophisticated form of essentialism. The bar between the essentialism and constructionism is by no means solid and unassailable as advocates of both sides assume it to be.¹⁴

It is my intention to break down this claim – to argue against Butler’s theorisations on physical matter to be seen as a “sophisticated essentialism” – by exposing how Fuss’s definition of constructionist interpretations do not apply to Butler’s interpretations of the body.

Engaging with the direct critic of Butler and her work, Martha Nussbaum, will follow engagement with Fuss. Nussbaum wrote a notorious critique of the revised release of *Gender Trouble, The Professor of Parody* (1999). The critique is a mixture of direct attacks on Butler’s scholarly style and academic feminist politics. Nussbaum accuses Butler of ineffectively and inaccurately representing “real women”. Due to this a defence of Butler’s interpretation of the physical form is required.¹⁵ Nussbaum attacks Butler, saying her “naively empty politics is especially dangerous for the very causes [Butler] holds dear”, and accuses her of pessimistic, sexy and flirtatious academia, which is easier than the old feminism:

[Butler tells] scores of talented young women that they need not work on changing the law, or feeding the hungry, or assailing power through theory harnessed to material politics. They can do politics in safety of their campuses, remaining on the symbolic level, making subversive gestures at power through speech and gesture.

14 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. xii

15 Nussbaum, M. *Professor of Parody*, The New Republic Online, Issued 22.02.1999 <http://www.tnr.com/index.mhtml> (08.08.2011)

This, the theory says, is pretty much all that is available to us anyway, by way of political action, and isn't it exciting and sexy?¹⁶

Nussbaum's grievances will be covered in depth, paying special attention to the two "stronger and more contentious" claims that "that there is no agent behind or prior to the social forces that produce the self" and "that the body itself, and especially the distinction between the two sexes, is also a social construction."¹⁷ I believe her accusations are born from a misunderstanding of Butler's interpretation of the physical form and performativity. Nussbaum believes that Butler denies physicality, suggesting Butler argues that context dictates physical attributes and that she has an essential protagonist performing a gender. Neither of these interpretations is accurate. By the end of my second chapter, I hope the criticisms that Nussbaum puts forward will be shown to be an obvious misinterpretation of Butler. During my analysis of Nussbaum's critique, term performativity will be covered and it will be re-explained in the context of its misreading.

It is my intention to effectively defend the body as only intelligible after culture. The success of this defence will problematise the feminist belief in the transsexual's inherent misogyny, as it will destabilise the definition of woman when based upon an unintelligible natural foundation.¹⁸ As a result of the defence of Butler's sex as only intelligible after culture – establishing natural foundations as unintelligible – I hope to expose contradictions within emancipatory feminist politics when based on the binary distinction of biological essentialism. The importance of contradictions inherent in feminist politics will become self evident in the third chapter (in regards to the definition of feminine-owned space as only allowing both occupation and engagement by valid women).

By the third chapter, I should have successfully expounded Butler's relevant theorisations, defended criticisms of these theorisations and in doing so, clarified any further points of confusion surrounding the sex/gender distinction and performativity. From here, I will engage directly with the feminist belief that the act of transsexualism is misogynistic; a calculated and aggressive encroachment on both the feminine psyche and physicality, fuelled by the hatred of women.¹⁹ To do this, I will focus primarily upon the book, *The Transsexual Empire* (1979) by Janice Raymond, supported when needed by Germaine Greer and Mary Daly.

My third chapter will concisely cover all aspects within Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* concerning transsexualism. Alongside this explication, I will acknowledge criticisms of the text, primarily from the critique *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's Transsexual Empire* (1996), by Carol Riddell. On completion of the explanation of *The Transsexual Empire* I will apply Butler's argument of sex as denaturalised, and femininity and woman being defined

16 Ibid

17 Ibid

18 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 2-3

19 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 112 and Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. 60

after culture.²⁰ The application of these two defended arguments will argue against the view that male-to-female transsexuality is inherently misogynistic. This will be done on the grounds that the transsexual, like any other subject, is a culmination of discursive effects. These effects are both created and understood via cultural signifiers. The transsexual subject, like all other subjects, is only intelligible after culture. All the symbols they display are the result of a patriarchal economy – and the entire signifying economy is patriarchy based. Both femininity and masculinity are created within the patriarchal discursive framework. Focussing on one form of transsexualism (male-to-female) and one institution is too narrow and fails to see the exercise of this economy on gender as a whole: the fabrication of gender to reinforce a heterosexual matrix.²¹ Raymond’s suggested cure to the condition of transsexuality is to support the affected subjects in rediscovering their “integrity”.²² However, this is actually a conformation to the misogynistic empire that she is fighting so hard to expose, a reflection of sex-role culture: a defined maleness and femaleness.

I will also define the difference between transsexual and transvestism. This will be key to understanding Raymond, Greer and Daly’s definition of the transsexual. All three refuse to differentiate between a transsexual and transvestite (drag queens), believing the individuals to suffer from a form of institutional-instigated condition: Gender Dysphoria, which in the case of the transsexual requires the pain of surgery to provide the sufferer with sufficient closure to comfortably embody their condition.²³ However, Raymond argues that one surgery is not usually enough to completely satisfy the sufferer but rather begins a lifelong surgical dependency.²⁴

Whilst there is a relation between the condition of transsexuality and transvestification (each participant adorning the opposite gender’s apparel to create the appearance of the preferred gender), cross dressing/drag performance/transvestification will not be discussed in depth in this essay. However, reference will be made to the importance of drag performance as a Butlerian method of subversion of gender norms.²⁵ Sexuality and orientation will also not be discussed. I will briefly address Butler’s own writings regarding transsexualism in her critique of the film *Boys Don’t Cry* (1999), clarifying an instance where she has directly engaged with the field.

My essay will not use the Raymond convention of quote-marking pronouns of postoperative transsexuals.²⁶ For example, the transsexual male Stephen Whittle will be referred to as he, with no quote marks.²⁷

20 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996.

21 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 41

22 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 154

23 Ibid 144

24 Ibid 172

25 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 183 - 189

26 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. xvi

27 S. Whittle, *Gender Fucking or Fucking Gender*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 107

Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* assumes a number of factors regarding the medical institution, as well as offering statistical supporting evidence. The purpose of this dissertation is not to dispute any of the evidence Raymond has amounted in support of her claim but to destabilise the foundations she has built the claim upon. Raymond, Daly and Greer refer frequently to the masculine saturation of the medical industry.²⁸ The medical institution which created the treatment and technology that enables individuals to transsex, is Raymond's "Empire".²⁹ Raymond's medical expertise and depth of knowledge regarding gender statistics is not an area I will be critiquing, however her lack of direct medical expertise and limited personally-conducted field research is an area of criticism from Carol Riddell and she is considered by Dave King to be a critic from outside of the medical profession.³⁰ This dissertation however, is focussed upon disproving that the male to female transsexual subject is any more inherently misogynistic than any other gendered body.

28 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 94-95 and Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 167-168

29 Ibid xiv

30 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 180 and King, D. *Cross-Dressing, Sex-Changing and the Press*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 149

As mentioned in the introduction, Judith Butler's use of the Foucaultian reading of culture and the development of social norms is essential to understanding her theorisations surrounding both Sex and Gender. In the writing of *Gender Trouble* and a number of papers preceding it, Butler evolved her conceptions from the Hegelian-enlightenment-aspiring, essential attributed subject toward the Foucaultian culturally constructed and disciplined subject.³¹ Foucault's theory of discourse argues that instead of there being a universal and historical set of truths, truths are the effects of power accumulated within a discursive framework.³² This theory of truths also extends out to the subject. In Foucaultian thought, there is no essential part to the subject, no universal element, but rather the subject is the culmination of effects of power.³³ This Foucaultian formation of both truth and subject can be seen in Butlerian theorisations. Butler makes reference to Foucault's theory of discourse as early as the first page of *Gender Trouble*, referencing his reading of judicial power.³⁴ Foucault argues that judicial power is an effect of a discursive mechanism, which came into being for both producing and disciplining subjects. He theorises that the mechanism's construction is a result of a biopolitical requirement, which spawned from a shift in governmentality during the 16th century.³⁵ Throughout the Middle Ages, political documentation was primarily concerned with "advice to the prince".³⁶ However, Foucault theorises that at the turn of the 16th century the "art of government" formed, taking as its object the population. The population became both the means and the ends of government.³⁷ The art of government's concern was two fold: the population as a whole and the individual constituent of that whole.³⁸ With these two concerns, government developed a series of disciplinary mechanisms for both concerns, including methods of proliferating social norms. Social normalisation became essential to managing the individual as part of the population whole.³⁹ Foucault and Butler argue that it is normalisation techniques which are responsible for implantation of the notion of the pervert.⁴⁰ The Perverse Implantation as a disciplinary method is one area where Butler and the anti-transsexualism feminists differ in opinion.

31 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 43

32 Foucault, M. *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. v. 3 Penguin 3 edition. Edited by James D. Faubion, London, 2002. 119

33 Ibid 81 - 85

34 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 2

35 Foucault, M. *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. v. 3 Penguin 3 edition. Edited by James D. Faubion, London, 2002. 202

36 Ibid 201

37 Ibid 208 - 209

38 Ibid 404 - 405

39 Ibid 332

40 Foucault, M. *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge: v. 1*, Penguin; New edition, London 1998. 36

The Perverse Implantation is related to Foucault's theorisations of the Repressive Hypothesis. The Repressive Hypothesis is the belief that during the Victorian era there was a silence on all discussion regarding sexually related matters.⁴¹ Foucault does not agree with this view. He argues that at this time the Victorian government did the opposite; instead of suppressing discussion on sex, they took sex as their object and institutionalised the act.⁴² In doing so, metrics were gathered surrounding the subject, authorised speech was agreed upon and most importantly, the medical community created experts – specialists in sex.⁴³ These specialists created truths which gave rise to The Perverse Implantation. The Perverse Implantation was the result of the medical elite's development of what was considered correct and incorrect sexual acts. As a result, it was via the practice of what was considered incorrect sex that brought the pervert into being. Foucault and Butler argue that resultantly both the pervert and the incorrect practice of sex is a historical idea – a result of Victorian medical discourse. Foucault argues that The Perverse Implantation is one of multifarious, insidious individual and population-disciplining methods.⁴⁴

One discipline technique studied extensively by Butler is the invention of institutional language.⁴⁵ Butler studied how language is used as a conditioning mechanism – a tool created to invent authorised correct speech. The mechanism of language dictates what terms are given meaning and the terms' uses and effects. Language and its subsequent meaning have a great impact on feminist politics. Butler argues that “[the] judicial formation of language and politics that represent women as ‘the subject’ of feminism is itself a discursive formation and effect of a given version of representational politics”.⁴⁶ In other words, Butler believes that the female subject, which feminism represents, is an effect of the feminist political discourse. This idea will be developed upon in the second chapter.

Foucault claims that truths are effects of discursive power: using the Nietzschean idea of genealogy, “a mode of historical investigation that does not have ‘the truth’ or even knowledge as its goal”, each truth can be historically traced back to its institutional origin.⁴⁷ Foucault and Butler both argue that there is no outside of language/discourse. Butler acknowledges that par for the course of defining meaning, an ‘outside of meaning’ is referred to. However, this outside is unintelligible; an object's meaning is also defined by what the object isn't – what is outside of it.⁴⁸ Butler argues that the human mind operates via a posteriori means – the human brain can only understand signifiers after culture.⁴⁹ As Vicky Kirby assesses it, “Butler's desire to engage the structured movement of differentiation *within*

41 Ibid 10 - 12

42 Ibid 147

43 Foucault, M. *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. v. 3 Penguin 3 edition. Edited by James D. Faubion, London, 2002. 212 - 214

44 Foucault, M. *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*: v. 1, Penguin; New edition, London 1998. 36 - 37

45 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*, Continuum. London, 2006. 86

46 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 3

47 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002.10

48 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*, Continuum. London, 2006. 68

49 Ibid 68

language does not preclude the existence of an outside... it's just the human condition bars access to it."⁵⁰ With this, Butler recognises the difficulty in expressing the 'I'; the 'I' is prior to culture yet given meaning by culture. Understanding of the self is conceived in relation to understanding the other, and via tools of culture – specifically language: "I am not outside of the language that structures me, but neither am I determined by the language that makes this 'I' possible."⁵¹

The subject (individual), or for this purpose the object, is both the subject of language and subject to it. To search for an outside of this circular system is to search for an outside of the discursive system from within it, using the tools of the discourse. Whatever discovery is made will be fully implicated by the discourse from which the search was performed. Butler's notions of the natural world follow this line of reasoning: for her, the natural world is incomprehensible – the outside or before culture is not a standpoint any reasoning can follow from. Nature is understood after culture, using the tools of discourse, so as Kirby puts it, nature becomes ~~nature~~: the only natural we can comprehend is saturated in significant meaning and differentiation. Our comprehension is our nature, cultural is our natural. This understanding of nature holds particular significance in reference to anatomical sex.⁵² Nature is our understanding of the opposite of culture, however it can only be understood via culture: ~~nature~~. Butler argues that there is nothing *intelligible* prior to culture. Her use of the term 'intelligible' is important here.⁵³ 'Intelligible' is the term that many of Butler's critics forget to take into account when accusing her of idealism. In writing *Bodies that Matter*, Butler struggled to "fix bodies as simple objects of thought", finding that they "indicated a world beyond themselves".⁵⁴ She acknowledged that a world beyond the intelligible exists, but argued that it is incomprehensible: it doesn't 'mean'.⁵⁵ So to apply the same Kirby-style convention to the body, the body is only intelligible after culture; hence the body becomes the ~~body~~. Gender is the transformative tool which is applied to the body (an unintelligible form) to make the ~~body~~ (a comprehensible and socially valid form). How gender enables the body to be culturally intelligible will be explained further on.

The drive – though not the initiation – for Butler's study into feminist gender theory was taken from what she considers to be the violent, homophobic hetero-normative assumption of feminism. The subject (object) of feminism is to politically represent women; but Butler and others query, what if the term 'women' was not all-inclusive of all those that are culturally considered to be female? This questioning of the term 'woman' was followed by further queries regarding whether all women share a common identity, thus enabling an all-inclusive term.⁵⁶

50 Ibid 68

51 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. xxvi

52 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*, Continuum. London, 2006. 69

53 Ibid 69

54 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 iix

55 Ibid iix

56 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 4

The theorisations that femininity was not an essential essence inexplicably linked to the female sex, but rather the cultural understanding of the body of the female sex, arose from de Beauvoir's claim in *The Second Sex* (1949) that "one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman".⁵⁷ The claim served to argue that what was understood as a 'woman' was a social and historical concept, associated with the development of a subject with a female body. Theorisations following de Beauvoir's claim include Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970), which argued that women's social inequality was a direct result of biological restrictions associated with birth and rearing of children.⁵⁸ This definition, which linked being a woman with the procreational abilities of female bodies, acted as an exclusion for women whose sexualities were alternative to heterosexuality.⁵⁹ The definition of women based on their ability to procreate assumed that all women naturally or essentially desire men and resultantly, according to numerous female academics including Wittig and Butler, did not reflect the entire demographic of "woman kind".⁶⁰ This procreational assumption was exclusionary of those who do not "follow" cultural laws.⁶¹ From this, Monique Wittig argues that the lesbian does not qualify as a woman when the category woman is constructed in binary format: man/woman. In this matrix, if what defines femininity is heteronormativity then a woman who does not engage in hetero-normative activity is not a woman.⁶² Detailed repercussions of Wittig's formulations appear in the second chapter of *Gender Trouble*, 'Prohibition, Psychoanalysis, and the Production of the Heterosexual Matrix'. In this chapter, Butler goes further than just highlighting the inferred homophobic determinism of the category woman; she goes on to highlight the social and racial implications of sweeping feminist politics and the aims and objectives of the movement, criticising the idea of a universal basis for a feminine identity. The idea that an identity could exist cross-culturally "...often accompanies the notion that the oppression of women has some singular form discernible in the universal or hegemonic structure of patriarchy or masculine domination."⁶³ Butler notes that the idea of universalised patriarchy has been heavily criticised for failing to demonstrate examples of its existence in cultural contexts. Efforts to find examples have made the assumption of its existence from the start.⁶⁴ Butler continues from this to observe that this universalising approach to feminine identity bears a resemblance to "efforts to colonise and appropriate non-western cultures to support highly western notions of oppression."⁶⁵

In conclusion, Butler argues that feminism by suggesting a universal identity for emancipatory purposes is undermined by the restraints the regulatory category of woman infers. Feminism by, seeking to consolidate all female subjects with a shared identity risks failure by not taking into account "constitutive powers of their own representational claims."⁶⁶

57 Ibid 45

58 Macey, D. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*, Penguin New Ed edition, London, 2004. 36

59 Ibid 129 – 130

60 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 153

61 Ibid 24

62 Ibid 26

63 Ibid 5

64 Ibid 5

65 Ibid 5

66 Ibid 6

As Butler puts it: “By conforming to a requirement of representational politics that feminism articulate a stable subject, feminism thus opens itself to charges of gross misrepresentation.”⁶⁷ She raises queries regarding the effectiveness of feminism as a political sect, “Is the construction of the category woman as a coherent and stable subject an unwitting regulation and reification of gender relations?”⁶⁸ And from this suggests that feminism as a movement is based on a representational signifier, the signifier formulated in a patriarchal discourse, which is defined and given meaning by the patriarchy. The subject formed in this patriarchal signifying discourse is now impossible to emancipate, its existence is dependent on the discourse it seeks to emancipate from. Further to this, Butler queries whether the division of the sexes into two permanent camps has solidified the difference between the genders and caused those who do not fit into either to be considered invalid.⁶⁹ She asks, in a culture of two sexes, male and female, how is it possible to categorise a subject which is neither – a hermaphrodite?

In any case, while Butler was unhappy with the generalising assertions of feminism, at the heart of her understanding of constructed gender was her reading of Simone de Beauvoir’s claim that “one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman”.⁷⁰ In the French documentary, *Judith Butler* (2006), Butler explains the birth of her thesis – after being asked to give a talk on feminist theory she turned to de Beauvoir for inspiration. It was then that she built upon the Nietzschean notion of becoming (the perpetual movement of the subject toward a non-existent end goal) within de Beauvoir’s claim, giving rise to the idea that woman never became – woman was a subject never completed.⁷¹ Butler investigated what limited this theory to the development of the female gender solely, and whether it could be extended to all gender. From this she went on to investigate whether it is possible for a subject born male or female to become something else entirely.⁷² Butler questioned what assurances there are to ensure the sex a subject is born with develops into the gender that that sex dictates and whether there is a teleology surrounding this development.

The investigations into de Beauvoir’s claim formulated the thesis for *Gender Trouble*. *Gender Trouble* argues that the sex/gender distinction aids feminist politics and enables gender to be isolated from the physical – recognised as culturally constructed, not as a physically fixed developed result of anatomy. Gender is seen as a development or a process, it is the cultural meaning the sexed body assumes.⁷³

Butler describes gender as “the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being.”⁷⁴ Salih observes

67 Ibid 6-7

68 Ibid 7

69 Ibid 26

70 Ibid 173

71 Zadjermann, P. *Judith Butler: Philosophical Encounters of the Third Kind*. (via Youtube 23.05.2011 part 2/6)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTz-_YeUIUg&feature=related : 26.06.11 – 7mins 25 secs.

72 Ibid

73 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 8

74 Ibid 45

Butler's idea of gender is not just a process but also a particular type of process. For Butler, gender is the enactment of a selection of options from a restricted framework. This selection is not a free choice made by an essential subject: gender is a matter of performativity.⁷⁵ A large point of critical contention for many of Butler's critics is her theory regarding performativity: gender is performativity not performance. To aid her theorisations regarding performativity, Butler refers to Nietzsche, "there is no 'being' behind doing, effecting, becoming; 'the doer' is merely a fiction added to the deed – the deed is everything."⁷⁶ Performativity is the process which wills the subject into being, makes the subject culturally comprehensible. Unlike a performance, there is no essential protagonist. The subject is their performance, or more specifically, their performances. Foucault theorises that the subject is a collection of discursive effects. For Butler, these discursive effects are a multitude of performances which constitute the subject. The subject is in part their gender (among other things), and the subject is and does their identity. Female and male, and masculine and feminine are no longer nouns but instead become verbs.⁷⁷ The disconnection of gender from its relation to sex, the natural (not the Butlerian natural) destabilises the relationship between the two.

Sex as 'natural', an object outside of discourse is not comprehensible. The body is only understood as our comprehension of its physicality after culture. Meaning is given to the physical substance via our interpretation of gender – the physical is ascribed with gendered meaning. For Butler, the sexed body is a cultural effect; the meaning of the physicality is sociologically produced.⁷⁸ However, like gender, the production is not wilful or artificial in the traditional sense. Whilst 'synthetic', the sexed materialisation requires a differentiated production of masculine and feminine – a production that cannot be fully exhaustive and will only work through reiteration and exclusion.⁷⁹ From this, Butler re-examined the ordering of sex and gender. Asking, if gender follows the identification of the physical form (sex) as either male or female, then how is gender capable of inscribing meaning upon that sex? How can sex precede the gender, which is the cultural meaning of the sexed body?⁸⁰ As Butler explains in *Gender Trouble*, "if gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way."⁸¹ Thus, gender cannot follow on from sex, and so sex as a foundation becomes unstable. Butler suggests with the character of sex contested maybe sex was as constructed as gender, perhaps it was already gender and the sex gender distinction was no distinction as all.⁸² Supporting this destabilisation are queries surrounding the binary categorisation of sex, particularly when, as previously mentioned, hermaphroditism is put forward for categorisation.⁸³ Resultantly, Butler argues that sex and gender are implicit of one another, and both discursive effects.⁸⁴

75 Ibid 63

76 Ibid 34

77 Ibid 34

78 Ibid 14

79 Ibid 140

80 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 32

81 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 9

82 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 9 - 10

83 Ibid 32

84 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 49

In order to support the theorisation that sex and gender are implicit of one another, Butler returned to de Beauvoir, to demonstrate how the process of gendering is linked to the sex of the subject. Butler argued that gendering is “an ongoing discursive practice, it is open to intervention and resignification”.⁸⁵ This gendering is dependent not upon choice but cultural compulsion. The subject’s identity is formed as a result of discursive practice; the identity is subject to intervention and resignification. If, as an alternative to institutional discursive practice, there was an essence or agency with free will choosing which gender they were to enact, sex to gender deviation would be a matter of choice. However, the subject does not have choice or an essential essence deciding upon their identity. Gender is culturally constructed signifiable qualities – these cultural compulsions which the subject is subjected to are dictated by anatomical meaning. If gender gives sex meaning, it follows that

‘the body’ is itself a construction, as are the myriad ‘bodies’ that constitute the domain of gendered subjects. Bodies cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of their gender; the question then emerges: To what extent does the body *come into being* in and through the mark(s) of gender?⁸⁶

In other words, the physical substance of matter comes into comprehension when ascribed with gendered meaning, thus the body is culturally constructed.⁸⁷ This cultural construction of sex is Butler’s materialisation of discursive effects, “sex appears within hegemonic language as a substance, as, metaphysically speaking, a self-identical being.”⁸⁸ In *Gender Trouble*, the body only exists within discourse, whereas in *Bodies that Matter*, Butler concedes that a physical entity may exist outside of discourse but it is not intelligible: in nature (nature) the body’s physical substance and the notion of sex are “achieved through a performative twist of language and/or discourse that conceals the fact that ‘being’ a sex or a gender is fundamentally impossible.”⁸⁹

As established, gender is understood “as a relation among socially constituted subjects in specifiable context”, meaning the subject’s being is contextual. Being is dependent on a variety of discursive conditions, including historical relations; hence gender is reactive to social conditions.⁹⁰ The subject’s gender and sex are read via signifiers, which in this case is the reading of performativity. Through performativity, masculine/feminine, sex and gender shift from “being” to “doing”.⁹¹ As mentioned, male/female and masculine/feminine transform from nouns to verbs: “in this sense, gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes... gender is performatively produced and

85 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 45

86 Ibid 12

87 Ibid 12

88 Ibid 25

89 Ibid 25 - 26

90 Ibid 14

91 Ibid 34

compelled by regulatory practices of gender coherence.”⁹² We “do” gender and sex rather than “be” it, we enact the repeated stylisation which constitutes discernible gender.

With gender and sex transmuted to verbs, they are reunited – signifiably linked via action. In the revised preface of *Gender Trouble*, released in 1999, Butler summarises what she meant by performativity, “In the first instance, then the performativity of gender revolves around this metalepsis, the way in which the anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself,” secondly, and more importantly, “performativity is not a singular act but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalisation in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration.”⁹³ In essence, performativity is the gender element of the identity; it is not a chosen performance – it is a materialised behaviour. Sara Salih suggests this is the crux of some critics’ misinterpretation: “How can there be a performance without a performer, an act without an actor?”⁹⁴ But Butler is not claiming there is a performance; there is no pre-existing subject which performs. Butler’s subject instead bears close resemblance to the Foucauldian; there is no essential attribute, no independent agency or pre-existing self choosing its composition. The subject is an amalgamation of effects manifested as identity and behaviour.⁹⁵ Performativity is the enactment of significations ascribed with cultural meaning, allowing for behaviours and bodies to be categorised by sex or gender. This enactment is not by choice, there is no pre-meditative self; the aforementioned subject has no independent, non-constructed agency. This is a concept which has been misinterpreted by some of Butler’s critics.⁹⁶

Gender Trouble’s second chapter, ‘Prohibition, Psychoanalysis, and the Production of the Heterosexual Matrix’, investigates how the discursive production of truths formulates the culturally ascribed elements which go on to create the intelligible self and other. It is here that Butler turns to psychoanalysis to examine the genealogy behind the construction of the understanding of the “I”: what performative signifiers derive their meaning from, and how, as well as the differential value of each signifier in relation to one another. Butler begins the examination with Levi-Strauss and Lacan, then follows on to Freud. Due to the primary concern of the argument being whether male-to-female transsexualism is misogynistic and how this relates to whether it is an act of misogyny for a male subject to transsex to a female body, it is not relevant to give an account of Butler’s theorisations surrounding Lacanian theory. Butler’s work on Lacan principally concerns how the female subject is read culturally, including the history of her commodification and her use as an object of social exchange. However, briefly following Freud, I will outline Lacan’s “homolette” and its importance to the Butlerian subject.

Butler’s reading of Freud serves to explain how gender becomes established within the subject’s identity. In addition to this, Butler goes on to explain how this can be reinterpreted to also include gendered inscription upon the body. In

92 Ibid 34

93 Ibid XV

94 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 63

95 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 195

96 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 68

Freudian analysis, a key stage of identity formation is the unrequited heterosexual incestuous love for a parent; this is known as the Oedipus complex or Oedipal stage.⁹⁷ Freud theorises that the Oedipal stage is a point during a child's development at which the child falls in love with the parent of the opposite sex. David Macey expands upon this, stating that the canonical expression of this term in 1910 referred to "the boy's perception of his mother as a sexual object and his father as a rival."⁹⁸ According to Freud, the child rejects the mother as its primary love interest due to fear of the father's retribution; the mother is a "tabooed subject of desire."⁹⁹ Butler attributes this loss to Freud's formation of the subject's identity:

...in the experience of losing another human being whom one has loved, Freud argues, the ego is said to incorporate that other into the very structure of the ego, taking on attributes of the other and 'sustaining' the other through magical acts of imitation. The loss of the other whom one desires and loves is overcome through a specific act of identification that seeks to harbor that other within the very structure of the self: 'So by taking flight into the ego, love escapes annihilation.'¹⁰⁰

It is the lack of reciprocation of this love and its suppression which leads to an introjected, melancholic-inspired identification that moulds the subject's gender tendencies.

Introjection is the process whereby objects from outside of the self are taken into and preserved by the ego: the subject's identity.¹⁰¹ Melancholia is the subject's response to an imagined loss, thus introjected melancholia is the inscription of an object or experience onto the development of the subject, inspired by an imagined loss. Hence, Freud argues it is this heterosexual restricted experience which is introjected, manifesting as a heterosexual melancholic identity in the subject.¹⁰²

Butler vehemently opposes Freud's thesis of primary bisexuality and refutes the idea of innate sexual dispositions.¹⁰³ Freud explains dispositions toward same-sex sexual relations as having heterosexual aims, "bisexuality is the coincidence of two heterosexual desires within a single psyche". By this formulation, Freud rejects the idea of homosexuality in essence; for Freud, only opposites attract.¹⁰⁴ Butler argues that Freud denies an original sexual love from a son to his father, and does so without reason.¹⁰⁵ As a consequence, Butler re-examines this process, suggesting an unrequited homosexual desire as a valid possibility. The desire, Butler argues, leads to the identification with the

97 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 80

98 Macey, D. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*, Penguin New Ed edition, London, 2004. 281

99 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 79

100 Ibid 78

101 Ibid 79

102 Ibid 92

103 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 54

104 Ibid 82

105 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 80

same-sex parent, again manifesting as an introjection, but then leading to an incorporative inscription on the flesh – shaping not only gender but sex as well.¹⁰⁶ Incorporation is the process by which objects are preserved onto the body; the incorporation of the unrequited love is a physical identification for the subject – the subject comes to embody its desire.¹⁰⁷ From the Butlerian perspective of the incest-desire as homosexual rather than heterosexual, the argument is as follows: the infant, in this case male, rejects his homosexual desire, not just due to the fear of castrative retribution from the father, as with heterosexual incest, but rather the punishment of “feminisation” exacted by the hetero-normative culture.¹⁰⁸ Butler argues, as does Foucault, that the taboo against homosexuality is much greater than that against incest, due to its presumed break with “natural” law – its perversion. In his text, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), Freud’s contemporary, Krafft-Ebing, defined homosexuality as a perversion of sexual instinct.¹⁰⁹ Within a culture where heterosexuality is sanctioned and homosexuality punished, the homosexual incest desire suggested by Butler requires dual renunciation: renunciation of both the object-cathexis (the desired object) and the desire itself. For the developing subject, the renunciation causes a twofold loss: the repression of the desire itself and the never-expressed or reciprocated love of the object-cathexis.¹¹⁰ The Freudian interpretation argues that it is through the repression of the heterosexual desire for the parent that the subject “displaces his heterosexual attachment, in which case he fortifies his attachment to his father and thereby ‘consolidates’ his masculinity”, thus forming the gender.¹¹¹ Butler’s reading however, consolidates both the gender and the inscription of this gender on to the flesh.

Freud and Butler’s subject’s exclusion from the object-cathexis consequently inspires a feeling of loss, a loss specifically for the physical object – the sex object. This loss for the sexed object becomes internalised; for Freud the loss is introjected, forming melancholia which manifests as an identification. But for Butler, her suggested homosexual incest inspires both incorporation and introjection, manifesting a two-fold loss – or melancholia. As a result, the melancholic response, similarly to Freud’s, is the assimilation of the loss into the self. However, unlike Freud’s hetero-identification, Butler maintains that “if the melancholic answer to the loss of the same-sexed object is to incorporate, and indeed to *become* that object, through the construction of the ego ideal, then gender identity appears primarily to be the internalisation of a prohibition that proves to be formative of identity”.¹¹² She developed upon this by asserting “this identity is constructed and maintained by the consistent application of this taboo, not only in the stylisation of the body in compliance with discrete categories of sex but in the production and ‘disposition’ of sexual desire.”¹¹³ Butler’s ‘consistent application’ of the taboo – against homosexuality – is constantly enforced, and as a result manifests as a feminine stylisation in women, masculine in men and a heterosexual ‘disposition’. Butler argues that ‘dispositions’ are,

106 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 58 and Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 92

107 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 54

108 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 80

109 Richard von Krafft- Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Stein and Day Publishers, Unknown, 1899. 53 and 57

110 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 79

111 Ibid 81

112 Ibid 86

113 Ibid 86

instead of phenomenological tendencies, cultural constructions; “results of affectivity being formed or ‘fixed’ through the effects of prohibition.”¹¹⁴

As demonstrated by both Butler and Freud, sex proves to be both gendered and a result of the desire for the object-cathexis. The subject either introjects and/or incorporates the visual cultural compulsions of the unrequited object-cathexis – the subject becomes the form of what it desires.¹¹⁵ As a result, sex is the product of relationships between subjects: an effect of discourse. The subject’s introjected gender and incorporated sex is given meaning from representational qualities – the subject subsumes the visible qualities of the other. Sex (and gender) becomes comprehensible, not as the cause of discourse but as an effect. Like Freud, Lacan’s subject’s identity is also formed by loss – more specifically, the subject is “decentred”.¹¹⁶ Decentring is a deprivation of an experience; an experience which “seems” fundamental to the evolution of being. Since this fundamental experience never comes to pass, the subject forms out of the deprivation of a longed-for and unknown experience – the incest taboo.¹¹⁷ Notably for this argument, Butler uses Lacan to outline subject self-recognition and two self defining truths. Lacan’s infant subject constructs and understands itself as different from (an)Other; this subject consolidation occurs when it perceives itself from the vantage point of (an)Other, namely “The Mirror Stage”.¹¹⁸ For Lacan, this stage establishes the two self defining truths mentioned above. Firstly, the self is a bodily self, the encounter with the mirror grounds all ideas of self within a physical case (prior to this the “perception of its amorphous ubiquity.... punningly described as an”hommelette”).¹¹⁹ Secondly, the self will develop a relationship with the visible world as a perception of differences, a series of inter-relationships – how the self measures to the otherness.¹²⁰ This bears importance to transsexualism, as it highlights that the subject’s identity is encased in a physicality, and that physicality and identity are developed via a series of relationships and measured differences.

Following on from briefly highlighting Lacan’s subject’s self-recognition as contextual and in difference to the Other, I move to Derrida. Derrida, like Butler, is keen to resist the totalising theories of feminism and, like Foucault, discourages such histories of thought; instead advocating genealogical study.¹²¹ Early in Derrida’s work the idea of *différance* found its way into feminist and gender theory, as a term to describe the multiplicity of sexual differences.¹²² The Derridean term *différance* is the idea that a sign acquires its meaning in relation to other signs. Every sign is always dependent upon other signs to convey meaning: “Derrida elaborates that the meaning of any apparently ‘present’ sign is nothing but the relationship between all absent meanings that the term is not. The play of relational, differentiating linguistic

114 Ibid 86

115 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 57

116 Žižek, S. *How to Read Lacan*. Granta Books., London, 2006. 53

117 Ibid 53

118 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*, Continuum. London, 2006. 57

119 Ibid 57

120 Ibid 58

121 Deutscher, P. *How to Read Derrida*. Granta Books London, 2005. 47

122 Ibid 47

value between all the absent terms is at work in any sign whose meaning we seem able to isolate.”¹²³ Meaning no sign is independent or autonomous, containing meaning within itself. A sign is a part or a network connecting one to another, to give each a meaning of its own. Différance specifically outlines the implications of relational meaning, its infinite displacement and the discrepancy between signifier and signified. This reading potentially renders language with a plethora of meaning and relative terms that blur and relinquish plausible definitions.¹²⁴

For Butler’s gender theorisations, it is Derrida’s Citation which bears most significance. Citation is referenced within *Gender Trouble*, however Derrida is not referred to specifically. In *Bodies that Matter*, Salih observes that Butler uses the idea citation in a very specific Derridean way – to describe the ways in which “ontological norms are deployed in discourse, sometimes forcibly and sometimes not.”¹²⁵ Salih explains citation by referencing a seizure of another theorist’s weakness, regarding performative utterances. J.L. Austin claims utterances are only ‘successful’ if they are uttered in the correct context by those authorised to utter them.¹²⁶ A performative utterance, as opposed to a constative one, is an utterance which ‘does something’.¹²⁷ The performative statement performs an action, for example the words “I do” in a wedding service is the an utterance committing one person legally to another. A constative utterance describes – it can be true or false. The weakness Derrida seizes on is in reference to intention. Salih claims Austin went to great lengths to distinguish between ‘felicitous’ and ‘infelicitous’ statements.¹²⁸ He did so, Derrida argues, due to knowing that statements were liable to be taken out of context and used to convey meaning which was not originally intended.¹²⁹ This appropriation of signs into new contexts is Derrida’s re-citation.

In *Bodies that Matter*, Butler quotes Derrida in regards to citation: “Could a performative succeed...if its formulation did not repeat a ‘coded’ or iterable utterance...if it were not identifiable in some way as a citation?”¹³⁰ She answers by highlighting that citation only works (provisionally) because the action cited echoes prior actions, which accumulate the force of authority via the repetition or citation of a prior, authoritative set of practices.¹³¹ Utterances outside of their context only function by drawing upon their historicity to expose their de-contextualised nature. For Butler, this is a very important tool in her argument of the subversion of gender norms.

Butler evolves the Derridean theory of citation in relation to both drag and parody in *Gender Trouble*, in the chapters ‘Subversive Bodily Acts’ and ‘Parody to Politics’ and also in *Bodies that Matter*, in the chapters ‘Gender is Burning:

123 Ibid 30

124 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 35

125 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 90

126 Ibid 90 - 91

127 Boucher, G. *The Politics of Performativity: A Critique of Judith Butler*, Issued 2006
http://www.parrhesiajournal.org/parrhesia01/parrhesia01_boucher.pdf (08.08.2011) 125

128 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 91

129 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 91

130 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 172

131 Ibid 172

Questions of Appropriation and Subversion' and 'Critically Queer'. Salih explains how Butler argues that gender is a fabrication inscribed upon the body, and as it is a fabrication it is possible to 'act' that gender. As all gender is performative, yet presents itself as true, Butler says it is fair to say all gender is parodic, however some genders are more parodic than others.¹³² When a gender is performed to highlight it's disjunction with the physical form, the performance becomes subversive. Drag performance is a re-citation of gender, a statement of (MTF drag performance) femininity uttered (performed) by a body out of gendered context – the body of a man. If the gender citation is successful, "subverting the inner and outer psychic space effectively mocks both the expensive model of gender and the notion of true identity."¹³³ Drag performance effectively reveals the imitative nature of all gender identities, playing upon social stereotyping of roles. The visualisation of gender in opposition to the sex of the subject destabilises the "true original", exposing this original to be a mutated copy with no original. However, Butler acknowledges that not all crossing of gender is subversive. The notion of a "primary gender identity" is parodied within some social groups, including drag, cross-dressing and the appearance of butch/femme identities.¹³⁴ The enactment of these identities have been observed to, uncritically assume sex-role stereotypes from the practice of heterosexuality, especially in the case of butch and femme lesbians.¹³⁵ It is in the enactment of this social stereotyping critics of Butler argue, that drag performance has only misogynistic motivations, emphasising gender difference negatively and degrading women.¹³⁶

Butler's understanding of drag as a potential tool of subversion, reflecting the imitative qualities of gender is not a view held by either Janice Raymond or Germaine Greer. Neither Raymond nor Greer see a disjunction between gender and sex but rather a misogyny and misguidance.¹³⁷ In the next chapter I will review the criticisms of Butler in regard to the denaturalisation of sex and it's relation to constructivist versus essentialist arguments, as well as more generalised criticisms. In chapter three I will move on to how her theories relate to the theorisations of anti-transsexualism feminists.

Chapter 2

In defence of performativity and sex as constructed

In this chapter it is my intention to defend Butler's claim that both sex and gender are subject to and constructed by culture, paying special attention to Butler's de-naturalisation of sex from the body. In defense of the claim that sex is a

132 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 65

133 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 186-187

134 Ibid 187

135 Ibid 187

136 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 187

137 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 86

social construct and denaturalised from the body, I will expose the contradictions within emancipatory feminist politics when based on sex and gender being distinct from one another. Butler's specific claim that sex is not natural but constructed is key to contesting the argument that the act of transsexualism is inherently misogynistic.¹³⁸ If sex is culturally constructed then the transsexual does not trespass into any female-owned space. The transsexual is like any other gendered body: an accumulation of discursive effects. These discursive effects enable the body to be intelligible, ascribing it with meaning. Butler claims that sexual difference is never simply a "function of material differences which are not in some way both marked and formed by discursive practices."¹³⁹ In this chapter I will concentrate solely upon Butlerian arguments concerning the body and its performance – the stylisation facilitating the reading of a gendered appearance. As in the first chapter, I will refer to Foucault's theorisations on "regulatory ideals" and how institutional structures of society produce and govern these "ideals" to create culturally significant, intelligible bodies.¹⁴⁰ These intelligible bodies are understood in society in a binary format: male or female and man or woman.¹⁴¹ Criticisms concerning analysis and development of the performance (femininity or masculinity) from any theorist used in *Gender Trouble* will not be responded to.¹⁴² How and what constitutes femininity, and why these beliefs arose is not relevant to transsexualism being read as misogynistic, and thus will not be engaged with. Only the performance itself by a male as feminine bears significance to the misogynistic reading.

The idea of sex as separate from gender is not a new one. According to Salih, Butler is most intensely criticised and engaged with regarding her theories on the materiality of the body – sex.¹⁴³ This chapter will detail and respond to criticisms from four of Butler's contemporaries, all of whom either take issue with her formulations surrounding materiality and the body, and the absence of subject agency or whose theories argue against Butler's understanding of the construction.¹⁴⁴ These four theorists are Diana Fuss, Martha Nussbaum, Barbara Epstein and Toril Moi.

The defence of Butlerian sex as constructed will begin with Diana Fuss, who does not engage directly with Butler in her publication *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference* (1989). Fuss's book tackles the essentialism-versus-constructionism polemic. An assessment of Fuss's arguments will outline how her definition of constructionist arguments does not completely comply with Butler's theorisations, meaning her claim – that all constructionist arguments operate as a sophisticated essentialism – cannot be applied to Butler. I will then examine Nussbaum's strongly expressed disagreement with Butler's representation of 'real women'. This will be followed by a review of how the binary has produced the 'real women' Nussbaum seeks to defend, leading to an acknowledgement of Epstein's difficulty in accepting the suggested chronology of the understanding of sex and gender. Finally, I will engage with the accusations of post-structuralist deduction of matter and Toril Moi's accusations of the sacrifice of matter.

138 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London, 1979. 167

139 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 Xi

140 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York, 2006. 32

141 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 xi

142 Ibid. xi

143 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers: Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 143

144 Ibid. 143

Diana Fuss, a self proclaimed anti-essentialist, wrote *Essentially Speaking* with the intention to “preserve (in both senses of the term: to maintain and embalm) the category of essence.”¹⁴⁵ Her intention was not to expose or discredit constructionists as closet essentialists, but to investigate what part essentialism plays in academic discourse.¹⁴⁶ In six chapters, her book covers: rethinking the essentialist/constructionist debate – leading to her demonstration that essentialism and constructionism are inextricably linked with each other, whether it is possible for social constructionists to dispense with the notion of essence entirely, essentialist/constructionist tensions within feminist theory, arguments surrounding the deconstruction of race, and finally an analysis of the controversy surrounding essential versus constructed homosexual identity.¹⁴⁷

Fuss’s definition of essentialism and constructionism are as follows: “Essentialism is most commonly understood as a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the ‘whatness’ of a given entity.”¹⁴⁸ As opposed to constructionism, which is the position that differences are constructed, not innate.¹⁴⁹ Whilst Fuss’s intention is not to expose or discredit any constructionist theories as essentialist, the book’s intended claim is to prove the following:

...there is no essence to essentialism, that (historically, philosophically, and politically) we can only speak of *essentialisms*. Correlatively, [the book] will also make the claim that constructionism (the position that differences are constructed, not innate) really operates as a more sophisticated form of essentialism. The bar between the essentialism and constructionism is by no means solid and unassailable as advocates of both sides assume it to be.¹⁵⁰

Butler does not believe this to be the case. Moya Lloyd observes that in *Gender Trouble*, Butler disengages herself from theorists who rely on pre-discursive naturalism or essentialist principles supporting their arguments.¹⁵¹ With the motivation to break the essentialism-versus-constructionism binary deadlock within feminism, Fuss goes on to illustrate the dependencies constructionism has upon essentialism. The bulk of the first chapter, “The ‘Risk’ of Essence” is dedicated to how essentialism is necessary to social constructionism.¹⁵² Fuss clearly outlines the tensions held between the essentialist and constructionist view of the physical body:

145 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. xiv

146 Ibid xii

147 Ibid xii-xiii

148 Ibid xi

149 Ibid xii

150 Ibid xii

151 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 30-31 and Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. xxi

152 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. 1

For the essentialist, the natural provides the raw material and determinative starting point for the practices and laws of the social. For example, sexual difference (the division into 'male' and 'female') is taken as prior to social differences which are presumed to be mapped on to, *a posteriori*, the biological subject. For the constructionist, the natural is itself posited as a construction of the social. In this view, sexual difference is discursively produced, elaborated as an effect of the social rather than, *tabula rasa*, its prior object. Thus while the essentialist holds that the natural is *repressed* by the social, the constructionist maintains the natural is *produced* by the social.¹⁵³

So far, Fuss's understanding of the constructionist viewpoint of the natural is in agreement with Butler, however it is in Fuss's constructionist debt and commonalities to essentialism that Butler and Fuss's theorisations disagree. To be clear, Butler does not deny a physical body; what she argues is that it is via discursive practice that this body comes into intelligible being: Fuss's 'a posteriori social mapping'. Fuss believes that constructionist claims share commonalities with essentialist claims, specifically in linguistics and histories.¹⁵⁴ She also claims that constructionist theories are fundamentally indebted to essentialism and theorised using "uncomplicated or essentialising" notions of history, and written using a retention of linguistic terms.¹⁵⁵ Fuss's retention of linguistic terms is as follows: "While a constructionist might recognise that 'man' and 'woman' are produced across a spectrum of discourses, the categories 'man' and 'woman' still remain constant."¹⁵⁶ Butler would disagree that a category can remain constant. Categories are also socially constructed, dependent on context. This will be referred to again later, in reference to Butler taking issue with feminism's category of woman being an unquestioned foundation for politics. This unquestioned categorisation and assumption of a term's meaning raises questions surrounding a universality of claims founded upon "a common or shared epistemological standpoint, understood as the articulated consciousness or shared structures of oppression or in the ostensibly transcultural structures of femininity, maternity, sexuality, and/or *écriture féminine*."¹⁵⁷

Fuss's prior claim – that constructionist theories are theorised using "uncomplicated or essentialising" notions of history – again does not reflect Butler's theorisations.¹⁵⁸ Fuss argues that constructionists make "recourse to historicity as a challenge to essentialism", however they still devise their own theorisations within an uncomplicated and linear history.¹⁵⁹ Butler's concept of history is far from uncomplicated. As explained in the first chapter, Butler uses the Foucaultian, Nietzschean notion of history, or rather genealogy.¹⁶⁰ In *Gender Trouble*, using genealogical methods, Butler exposes how institutional discourse produces disciplinary methods for both the creation and regulation of sexuality –

153 Ibid 3

154 Ibid. 4

155 Ibid 4

156 Ibid 4

157 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York, 2006. 19

158 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. 3

159 Ibid. 4

160 Foucault, M. *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought* (Penguin Social Sciences) Penguin; New edition London, 1991 77

Foucault's regulatory ideals.¹⁶¹ For Butler, nothing is intelligible outside of the cultural and historical realm – including biological difference. She questions the definition of the subject when based on biological difference, focusing on the discursive effects that have occurred to enable some arguments to be seen as holding ultimate and unquestioned legitimacy: “like Foucault, she sees the ontological as political”, investigating how biological difference has come to be an identity-defining criterion.¹⁶² Her investigation is facilitated by an in-depth understanding of language, its development and the consequences of its use – all linguistic terms are subject to scrutiny. For Butler, language holds great political importance. Vicky Kirby notes that *Bodies that Matter* begins by stating the “pure referent” (the body) is totally saturated by language.¹⁶³ There can be no access to a pure materiality of bodily life that is separate from language. Language is the tool of discourse which enables communication and comprehension of subjects.

Fuss's second example of the difference between essentialist and constructivist understanding of the body is that for the essentialist, the body occupies a pure, prior to culture space, existing outside of discourse – real and interpretable via the senses. This differs for the constructionist, as the body “is never simply there, rather it is composited of a network of effects continually subject to sociopolitical determination. The body is ‘always already’ culturally mapped; it never exists in a pure or unencoded state.”¹⁶⁴ This would not be a correct reading to apply to Butler's theorisations. Butler does not deny the existence of a body as ‘in a pure or unencoded state’ prior to discourse – or as she calls it ‘the pure referent’. What Butler denies is the human capability to process the body in this state. Our tools to process and understand physicality are within discourse. Without the marks of discourse i.e. gender, the body is incomprehensible – not absent as Fuss suggests. To reiterate Kirby's explanation given in the first chapter, nature is our understanding of the opposite of culture, however it is only understood via culture: ~~nature~~. Butler argues that there is nothing *intelligible* prior to culture: the use of the term ‘intelligible’ is important here.¹⁶⁵ ‘Intelligible’ is the term that many of Butler's critics forget to take into account when accusing her of idealism.¹⁶⁶ In writing *Bodies that Matter*, Butler struggled to “fix bodies as simple objects of thought”.¹⁶⁷ Finding that they “indicated a world beyond themselves”, she acknowledged that a world beyond the intelligible exists, but argued that it is incomprehensible – it doesn't ‘mean’.¹⁶⁸

Butler tackles the polemic of constructionism-versus-essentialism in the same way she deals with accusations of idealism: by questioning and refining the term ‘construction’.¹⁶⁹ Regarding the traditional understanding of physical matter she states “to claim that the materiality of sex is constructed through ritualised repetition of norms is hardly a

161 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York, 2006. 32

162 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 73

163 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory): Continuum*. London, 2006. 65

164 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. 5-6

165 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory): Continuum*. London, 2006. 69

166 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 71

167 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 iix

168 Ibid iix

169 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York, 2006. 11 and Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 72

self-evident claim. Indeed, our customary notions of ‘construction’ seem to get in the way of understanding such a claim.”¹⁷⁰ Bodies experience irrefutable sensations, they feel pain, hunger, pleasure etc. Butler concedes that these cannot be dismissed as construction. However, she suggests that instead of seeing construction as a single act casually performed by the subject in order to produce a fixed and expected result, it should be considered as a temporal process: “Construction not only takes place *in* time, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms; sex is both produced and destabilised in the course of this reiteration.”¹⁷¹ With this Butlerian formulation, construction can be seen as ‘processive’; the results manifested by reiteration, destabilised and exposed as construction via its need for the process to be reiterated. The body acquires its natural appearance or status from the ritualised repetition of normalisation practices.¹⁷² Thus the body is developed, rather than it being an essentialist irreducible element (irreducible is a term Butler uses for forms considered whole – ones which cannot be simplified further). The body as a process translates experiences to be subject forming, rather than simply isolated independent elements which impact upon a pre-existing subject. These effects are conditionally understood and composited via culture. The body, which the effects compile, can be argued to be a ‘whole’, conditionally understood by culture.

In answer to Fuss’s claim that all constructionist arguments operate as a sophisticated essentialism, a Butlerian observation would be to state that Butler is not a constructionist. Moya states that Butler refutes interpretations of her work as materialistic and does so by revising the idea of construction.¹⁷³ Butler expresses that her work is not “a theory of cultural construction” but rather a study of the landscape – “scenography and topology” of construction.¹⁷⁴ She does not construct matter; she examines what makes matter intelligible – she is a deconstructionist.¹⁷⁵ Fuss’s examination of Derridean deconstructionism will not be engaged with. The analysis is not pertinent to the argument regarding misogyny in relation to male to female transsexuality. A deconstructionist approach would start by breaking down the understanding of all the elements of the claim: the language which composites it; how the words were formed within the claim, and how they came to bear the meaning they express. Fuss’s understands essentialism to be “a belief in true essence – that which is most irreducible, unchanging, and therefore constitutive of a given person or thing”.¹⁷⁶ She later applies this to femininity: “essentialism can be located in appeals to a pure or original femininity, a female essence, outside the boundaries of the social and thereby untainted (though perhaps repressed) by patriarchal order.”¹⁷⁷ She claims that a female is female, inside or outside, before or after culture. This claim, however, can neither be formulated, nor express any meaning before/outside culture. Essentialism has no tools residing before/outside culture that enable intelligible communication. All essentialist methods are formulated a posteriori. Interpretations of essentialist claims are reliant on social conditioning: the reception of each argument also occurs after ‘culture’. In

170 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 ix

171 Ibidix

172 Ibid ix

173 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 72

174 Ibid 72

175 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York, 2006. 4

176 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989.2

177 Ibid2

conclusion, there is no possibility for a purely essentialist argument to be intelligible outside of discourse. Essentialism is thus fundamentally indebted to constructionism. There can be no such thing as a totally essentialist argument or subsequent claim.

From Fuss we move onto Nussbaum and her uncompromising critique, *The Professor of Parody*. Nussbaum published *The Professor of Parody* in response to the revised release of *Gender Trouble* in 1999. The critique's release caused controversy, not only for its comments regarding Butler's work but also for the way the critique was presented, in particular the tone of the text.¹⁷⁸ Sharon Crowley describes Nussbaum's 'notorious attack' as a 'rant', instigated by Nussbaum's fears that Butler's theorisations may contaminate the 'garden of philosophy'.¹⁷⁹ Nussbaum takes issue on numerous points within *Gender Trouble*, accusing Butler of peddling a branch of politics which "pays little attention to the struggles of women outside the United States", and which focuses on a verbal and symbolic politics, making the 'flimsiest' connections to 'real women' in 'real situations'.¹⁸⁰ Nussbaum characterises the politics that Butler practices and teaches as a sexy yet defeatist branch, evolved from the work of Foucault.¹⁸¹ Nussbaum describes Foucault's theories as pushing the idea that we are all prisoners of all-enveloping structures, and any and all efforts to emancipate from these structures are met with defeat and somehow, insidiously, positively serve the structures. Nussbaum holds Butler responsible for the reduced uptake of essentialist feminist politics:

As we wonder what has become of old-style feminist politics and the material realities to which they were committed, it seems necessary to reckon with Butler's work and influence, and to scrutinize the arguments that have led so many to adopt a stance that looks very much like quietism and retreat.¹⁸²

Nussbaum begins by commenting on Butler's difficult literary style, accusing her of intentional obscurity. She later suggests this is a technique used as a smoke screen to bamboozle her readers. Nussbaum questions who these readers are and who she is addressing in her writing. Nussbaum then returns to Butler's writing style, making reference to an award Butler won for bad writing. By the third section, Nussbaum begins critiquing Butler's thesis. She accuses it of being derivative, offering nothing new and dating the idea of denaturalised gender back to Plato. Nussbaum argues that there was already 'a copious body of writing' concerning denaturalised and artificial gender; so what, she asks, did Butler's *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter* really add?¹⁸³ Nussbaum concedes that Butler did offer recognition of the artificiality of gender distinctions, offering a beneficial enquiry into the reasoning behind the gender distinction as an assumed binary. Because performativity is Butler's most famous idea, Nussbaum scrutinises it very closely. She argues that Butler introduced 'the idea of gender performance' without theoretical precedent, and later denies that the

178 Crowley, S. *Reader Response: Judith Butler, Professor of Rhetoric*, JAC
<http://www.engl.unt.edu/~kjensen/practice/jaconline/archives/vol21.1/crowley-butler.pdf> (27.07.2011) 163

179 Ibid 163-164

180 Nussbaum, M. *Professor of Parody* The New Republic Online, Issued 22.02.1999 <http://www.tnr.com/index.mhtml> (08.08.2011)

181 Ibid

182 Ibid

183 Ibid

performance was quasi-theatrical but instead related to ‘performative utterances’ – denying any association with theatrical performance. Nussbaum finds all of these criticisms plausible until the introduction of two “stronger and more contentious” claims: firstly “that there is no agent behind or prior to the social forces that produce the self” and secondly “that the body itself, and especially the distinction between the two sexes, is also a social construction.”¹⁸⁴ Nussbaum finds both of these claims completely implausible. In regards to the lack of agency, she argues:

If this means only that babies are born into a gendered world that begins to replicate males and females almost immediately, the claim is plausible, but not surprisingly: experiments have for some time demonstrated that the way babies are talked to, the way their emotions are described, are profoundly shaped by the sex the adults in the question believe the child to have. Butler shows no interest in empirical facts but they do support her convention. If she means, however, that babies enter the world completely inert, with no tendencies and no abilities that are in some sense prior to their experience in a gendered society, this is far less plausible, and difficult to support empirically.¹⁸⁵

In reference to the body as social construction, Nussbaum states: “[Butler] means not only that the body is shaped in many ways by social norms of how men and women should be; she means also that the fact the binary division of sexes is taken as a fundamental, as a key to arranging society, is itself a social idea that is not a given in bodily reality.”¹⁸⁶ From this, Nussbaum claims Butler argues that the body is a constructed abstract pronouncement, floating high above matter and giving women none of what they physically need.¹⁸⁷ Reply to these accusations must be handled carefully. For Butler, Nussbaum’s “real women” is a loaded term, infused with layers of contradictory issues and unintelligible consequences. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler argues that acts performed in the name of ‘woman’ are futile. Political programmes seeking to change the social situations of groups of women do so without first determining whether the definition of “woman” in that social situation implies the oppression experienced.¹⁸⁸ She suggests that feminism ought to explore the totalising claims of the masculinist-signifying economy.¹⁸⁹ In any case, the two strong contentious claims Nussbaum finds implausible are a misreading. The initial claim relates to a lack of subject agency: the treatment of the child in respect to the sex that the handling adult presumes the infant to have. The child is treated differently depending on the sex the adult believes the infant to have. This ‘sexed’ handling of the infant is a result of discourse, a series of regulatory practices which dictate the correct way to handle that infant according to their sex. However, the infant’s tendencies and abilities are not meaningful activities. Butler does not deny the physical; she denies that the physical has meaning prior to culture or discourse. The tendencies and abilities mean nothing to the infant; the meaning is situated in the reading of these gestures by the onlooking adult, who has formed a reading of these

184 Ibid

185 Ibid

186 Ibid

187 Ibid

188 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 194

189 Ibid 18

tendencies and actions after culture. The second claim relates to Butler's theorisations of a constructed body. Nussbaum claims that Butler argues that the body is physically shaped by social norms, and in a way it is. A male and female appearance may be altered depending on the context within which they live: surgical implants, heels, makeup, etc. are all alterations made to facilitate a gendered meaning in that culture. Butler is not saying the physicality of a subject is determined by the context in which they live, she is only saying what that physicality means in that context/culture. The "binary division of sexes", which Nussbaum claims is a fact, is only considered a fact or truth following discourse. In *Gender Trouble*, the construction of the binary gender framework is explained in the chapter 'Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire'.¹⁹⁰ The chapter details how both de Beauvoir and Irigaray theorise on gender asymmetry: "Beauvoir turns to failed reciprocity of an asymmetrical dialectic, while Irigaray suggests that the dialectic itself is the monologic elaboration of a masculinist signifying economy."¹⁹¹ Butler develops this theorisation – supported by Wittig – to explain how the binary-subject-forming arguments of both de Beauvoir and Irigaray argue not for political representation of subjects, but instead for definition.¹⁹² Wittig and Foucault argue that the binary distinction brings subjects into being, giving them meaning and making them intelligible, instead of representing their existence.¹⁹³

As explained in the first chapter, the idea that normalisation procedures (including the sex-binary distinction) brings the subject into being, has great impact on the idea of the political subject; especially in regards to the subject being brought into 'being' by politics rather than being represented by it. The feminist political subject of woman, created by the movement rather than represented by it, is a matter of great concern for feminist academics. Consequently, this theory is heavily contested. The first chapter detailed how and why the distinction between sex and gender was a welcome one for feminists: the division of sex and gender enabled the argument that women's roles in society should not to be dictated by biology.¹⁹⁴ Women were enabled to argue that their participation in the workplace be based upon their capacity to work rather than their assumed physical limitations.¹⁹⁵ Feminist politics grounded the female body as the primary site upon which gender and the development of feminist politics was constructed.¹⁹⁶ The body supplied a firm, irrefutable foundation to affix feminist politics to. As such, the body was considered a pure referent; a female physical essence that Fuss describes as "outside the boundaries of the social and thereby untainted (though perhaps repressed) by patriarchal order."¹⁹⁷ Feminist politics, as observed by Butler, was "the politics of a collection of referents".¹⁹⁸ For essentialists, this referent was not subject to cultural construction but could still bear the physical

190 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 18

191 Ibid 18 and 15

192 Ibid 26 - 34

193 Ibid 22

194 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 4 and 40-41

195 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 45 and xx, Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 29 and Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 5

196 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 2

197 Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. 2

198 Ibid 5

scars of 'the patriarchal social order'. These patriarchal scars are a defining point of femininity for Janice Raymond.¹⁹⁹ Physical scars of patriarchal cultural compulsions ranged from sado-ritual exercises, such as clitoridectamies, to everyday normalisation procedures, like the wearing of high heels – which are “are almost becoming torture instruments”.²⁰⁰ Butler’s theory that there is no pure referent, and that feminist politics are founded upon a construction willed into ‘being’ by the very politics designed to represent it, poses a very problematic dilemma for Nussbaum, Greer and Raymond, who all argue for equal and fair representation of “real women”.²⁰¹

Butler’s theories which deem the notion of ‘real women’ as a social construct lead Nussbaum to accuse Butler of too much “focus on the symbolic” and prideful neglect of material, which amounts to a huge disservice to those women who are “illiterate, disenfranchised, beaten [and] raped.”²⁰² The Butlerian reading does not deny these women’s pains and wrongful treatment on account of their anatomy, but it instead highlights that womanliness or femininity holds different meanings for different women. Both the disenfranchised and the academic (a specific contrast Nussbaum chooses to draw upon) woman’s physical body may bear great similarity, but what it means to be a woman for either party amounts to completely different things.²⁰³ Butler argues that basing a politics on anatomical similarities alone, taking no account for cultural context, is impossible: “gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out ‘gender’ from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained.”²⁰⁴

Butler’s requirement of the definition of ‘woman’, in order for policies to be formulated surrounding that subject, highlights two things: firstly, that the definition of the subject relies on a context of fluctuating social implications; and secondly, that the act of feminist politics is a gesture performed without proper knowledge of the context or complexity of the female subject’s life. For Butler, when feminist politics is grounded in a commonality based on essentialist claims about the body, it acts as an assuming political movement. The movement formulates decisions without taking into account the socio-cultural context and the varying self-definitions of its subjects. Feminism relies on a presupposition that being a woman is a universal experience with a shared consciousness, which when all are emancipated will lead to political solidarity.²⁰⁵ If Butler’s sexed body is, as suggested, a social construction like gender, then the notion of female political solidarity is premised upon a claim which is not universal.

199 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 103

200 Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. 154 and Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 24 and <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/jul/02/gender.politicsphilosophyandsociety>

201 Nussbaum, M. *Professor of Parody* The New Republic Online, Issued 22.02.1999 <http://www.tnr.com/index.mhtml> (08.08.2011)

202 Ibid

203 Ibid

204 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 4-5

205 Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, Theatre Journal, Vol. 40, 1988. 523

We now move on from Nussbaum to Epstein's criticism that the reversal of sex and gender "strains belief".²⁰⁶ Epstein does not accept Butler's argument that gendering of the body occurs before sex is understood. Thus gender precedes sex and so it follows that gender and sex are implicit of one another, as argued by Epstein, "Biological difference has vast implications, social and psychological".²⁰⁷ To reiterate how Butler came to the conclusion that gender precedes sex, the investigation began by questioning the assumption that sex is an irreducible condition which enables a stable surface on which gender can be constructed. In her essay, *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory* (1988), Butler states, "If the 'reality' of gender is constituted by the performance itself, then there is no recourse to an essential and unrealised 'sex' or 'gender' which gender performances ostensibly express."²⁰⁸ In *Gender Trouble*, she expanded on this theory, stating that "sex by definition, will be shown to have been gender all along". Therefore, if gender is understood as unnatural, sex is also unnatural.²⁰⁹ Butler supports this conclusion of unnatural sex and gender by referring to de Beauvoir's disconnection of gender from sex: the conclusion that being a woman is not complicit with being born female, "one becomes one".²¹⁰ Butler states that 'the becoming' illustrates that gender is not a "stable identity or locus of agency", but is rather "an identity instituted through a stylised repetition of acts."²¹¹ She agrees with de Beauvoir regarding the establishment of gender via cultural compulsion, however she later disconnects from de Beauvoir concerning subject agency.²¹² With the process of acquiring gender identified and its reliance on both cultural interpretation and manifestation, the historical nature of gender is exposed.²¹³ With this historical exposure developed through history, Butler argues that the assumed order of sex and then gender begins to destabilise.²¹⁴ In *Performative Acts*, Butler describes the body as acquiring its gender, "...the body becomes its gender through a series of acts which are renewed, revised, and consolidated through time". In *Gender Trouble* this evolves to give performativity – a substantive property: "Gender is the set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulated frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being."²¹⁵ This evolution in Butler's arguments between the two publications demonstrates how she argues that the body became its gender; culturally conditional gender materialises into a comprehensible physical form: the intelligible sex. It is here that commonly critical misreadings occur. Butler argues that the body is the congealment of cultural ideas into reified forms – the actualisation of gender into physical form. She thus reunites the previously divorced concepts of gender and sex into one implicit form. In doing so, Moya observes that Butler deconstructs Christine Delphy's "unexamined presupposition: sex precedes gender", interrogating the chronological order of sex and gender assignment, breaking

206 Epstein, B. *Postmodernism and the Left*, <http://ww3.wpunj.edu/newpol/issue22/epstei22.htm> (03.08.2011)

207 Ibid

208 Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, Theatre Journal, Vol. 40,1988. 523

209 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 11 and Salih, S. Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 46

210 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 151

211 Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, Theatre Journal, Vol. 40,1988. 519

212 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 31

213 Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, Theatre Journal, Vol. 40,1988. 520

214 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 9

215 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 45 and Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, Theatre Journal, Vol. 40,1988. 523

down the dichotomy and deeming one implicit of the other.²¹⁶

Prior to *Gender Trouble*, it was commonly assumed by scholars that the body was a pure referent, existing a priori to the ascription of gender.²¹⁷ Gender was produced by society, applied according to the subject's anatomy – girls became women and boys men. Butler's most noted contributions to the field are her theorisations of identity as dialectical. This dialectical approach has been incorporated into other areas of study by those who agree with Butler's gender theorisations, as well as those who do not.²¹⁸ It is the questioning of corporeal ontologies where Butler's value to the field lies. Questioning corporeal ontologies she states: "If gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders."²¹⁹ With the clear establishment of the non-intelligible existence of nature – only ~~nature~~ ~~being~~ ~~comprehensible~~ – it seems fitting to apply the same Kirby-style explanation to this understanding of bodily substance. In *Bodies that Matter*, Butler strove to correct a common misapprehension with her theorisations on physical matter – the body. Butler does not deny materiality. What she denies is a pure substance which can be understood without the mark of gender. For Butler, the body is only intelligible after culture; hence the body becomes the ~~body~~ ~~body~~. Gender is the transformative tool which is applied to the body (an unintelligible form) to make the ~~body~~ ~~body~~ (a comprehensible and socially valid form).

Salih acknowledges that many critics experience difficulty with this concept. Some find it completely plausible that a male/female baby would grow into their masculinity/femininity: however, the idea that the chronology of sex and gender could be reversed (a masculine/feminine subject could grow into their male/female form) is, for some, ungraspable. She jests that "someone needs to take Butler to one side and explain where babies come from".²²⁰ As mentioned, Barbara Epstein argues that this concept – the reversal of sex and gender – "strains belief."²²¹ Butler does not deny that biological difference impacts the subject's social experience, but the impact is the understanding, and how the difference's cultural meaning is ascribed, not the anatomy itself – which is the foundation for this impaired experience.²²² Butler does not imply that anatomy of the body is dependent on social position, as Nussbaum suggests. Butler expresses that the subject's anatomy is not dictated by cultural context; the context dictates the meaning of the anatomy.²²³

In response to the conclusions drawn by Butler, that gender precedes sex to create the ~~body~~ ~~body~~, Butler's critics focus on

216 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 30

217 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 143

218 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 140-141

219 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 9

220 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 74

221 Epstein, B. *Postmodernism and the Left*, <http://ww3.wpunj.edu/newpol/issue22/epstei22.htm> (03.08.2011)

222 Ibid

223 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006.195

her method of making this argument – accusing her of reducing the body to a linguistic construction.²²⁴ In *Bodies that Matter*, Butler meets this criticism. Feminist critic, Toril Moi, claims that Butler risks sacrificing “the concrete, historical body that loves, suffers and dies.”²²⁵ Moi insists on the realness of matter and rejects the notion that language and matter are “indissoluble”, using this argument to accuse Butler of reducing physicality to “the linguistic idealism of poststructuralism”.²²⁶ Early in this chapter I referenced Butler’s rethinking of the term construction, leading to the body being understood as compiled rather than irreducible: ‘compositional elements which formulate matter conditionally understood and composited via culture’.²²⁷ Butler does not deny the body – a compilation of matter forming elements – certain “facts” of life: eating, sleeping, pain.²²⁸ However, she explains that the interpretation of these “facts” are subject to context and culture. She does not deny Moi’s definition of the body that feels and dies. However, there is a difference between physical pain and love. Butler concedes pain and death as “fact”: not a linguistic idealism, never denying the body its physical experience. As defined by Moi, the body can be injured, but the interpretation of that experience is the result of discursive effects. Love, on the other hand, is of a different order than physical pain. For Butler there is no pre-existing identity that feels, grows or evolves – as previously mentioned. Butler distanced herself from de Beauvoir in regards to subject agency.²²⁹ In de Beauvoir’s claim that “one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman” there is an essential protagonist who becomes.²³⁰ This is counter to Butler’s Foucaultian-compiled subject, who is made up of a collection of attributes forming their identity. Butler’s subject, like Foucault’s, is a culmination of effects – there is no essential essence or attribute.²³¹ Similarly to the understanding of the difference between performativity and performance, the subject does not have an actor who acts – they are the actions.²³² To reiterate: the ~~body~~ is not engaged in a performance, there is no actor behind the gender and the performance is itself a constitutive element of the ~~body~~. Like the Foucaultian soul, the agency of the subject is an institutional construction, a method of discipline and proliferation.²³³ Moi’s body, which feels emotion, not pain, does so as an institutional effect – a method of discipline.

In conclusion, I have shown how there can be no intelligible body prior to culture, and how politics based upon a body understood after cultural ascription is both defined by the heterosexual matrix and a politics of assumption, discounting the contexts of differing subjects. In the next chapter, I will investigate Janice Raymond’s claim that acts of

-
- 224 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. xii
- 225 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002.143
- 226 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 4 and Kirby, V. *Telling Flesh: The Substance of the Corporeal*. Routledge 1 edition. New York 1997. 102 and Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002.143
- 227 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 ix
- 228 Ibid ix
- 229 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 31
- 230 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 173
- 231 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 195
- 232 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 63
- 233 Foucault, M, *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. v. 3 Penguin 3 edition. London, 2002. 331-332 and Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 184

male-to-female transsexualism are inherently misogynist, and what effect Butler's denaturalisation of sex has on this claim.²³⁴

234 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. 1979. London 42 and Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007 80-93

In this chapter I intend to use Janice Raymond's publication, *The Transsexual Empire: the making of the she-male* to demonstrate arguments surrounding the view held by some feminists that the act of male to female (MTF) transsexualism is a misogynistic one.²³⁵ To aid explanation, I will be using the Germaine Greer-style naming convention in reference to the two types of transsexualism: 'male to female' will be shortened to MTF and 'female to male' to FTM, as set out in her publication *The Whole Woman*. When required, I will use both Greer and the theorist Mary Daly to support terminology, statements and arguments.²³⁶ Daly supported the writing of *The Transsexual Empire*; conversations between her and Raymond are referenced throughout the publication.

Following the demonstration of Raymond's argument, I intend to apply Judith Butler's theorisations surrounding the denaturalisation of sex from the body, and evidence how it destabilises Raymond's theorisations of MTF transsexual subject misogyny. One aspect of Butlerian destabilisation is the argument that in the case of the transsexual subject, as with all subjects, there is no wilful participant performing gender; there is no actor performing with choice, thus no essential subject with misogynistic motivations.²³⁷ With regards to the subject's body, Butler states there is no intelligible natural sex – the transsexual body, like all other subjects, is a collection of discursive effects. These effects are ascribed with cultural meaning, which enables comprehension of the subject. The transsexual, like all other subjects, is prescribed meaning via the same methods of signification. Unlike other bodies – male and female – the transsexual's gender and sex does not align; the meaning assigned to parts of their anatomy emphasises this disjointed relationship. The transsexual subject's gender is their cultural identity, some claim they are trapped in the body of the opposite sex.²³⁸ Raymond and Greer do not agree that the transsexual is a gendered subject trapped in the wrong body. Greer asserts that when a man claims he is a woman it is the only way for him to rid himself of healthy genitalia.²³⁹ Both Raymond and Greer hypothesise that transsexuals are diagnosed with a condition that has come into being, with no biological stimulus.²⁴⁰ Raymond theorises that sex determines the gendered cultural meaning that arises and both Raymond and Greer argue that the act of transsexualism is a wilful performance and the condition is an institutional effect.²⁴¹ Raymond reads that the transsexual's performance is a series of derogatory stereotypical sexually parodic roles.²⁴² Greer agrees with this analysis, and in *The Female Eunuch* labelled MTF transsexuals as

235 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 86

236 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 85

237 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 45

238 Garber, M. *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, Penguin, London, 1992.105

239 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 80

240 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 80 and Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 12 - 13

241 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. xv

242 Ibid. 16

"castrates".²⁴³ In each of their publications, both Greer and Raymond believe MTF transsexuals mock real women and invade female space, and there is nothing elevating or respectful about the performance.²⁴⁴

Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* is a study into the rise of transsexual surgeries and the normalisation of the term transsexual in everyday household vocabulary.²⁴⁵ In addition, Raymond gives her opinion on what the causes of transsexualism are and the repercussions of its introduction into everyday social circles, including feminist groups which accept the MTF transsexual as "one of their own".²⁴⁶

FTM transsexualism is only touched upon in *The Transsexual Empire*. According to Raymond, and supported by Mary Daly, FTM transsexuals are utilised as a "buffer zone" and are also used to help promote the deception that transsexualism is a supposed human problem instead of a uniquely male one. In addition to this, "female-to-constructed-male transsexuals are the 'final solution' of women perpetrated by the transsexual empire."²⁴⁷ What Raymond means by the 'final solution' is that these women, who are now men, are the institution's "ultimate weapon".²⁴⁸ When the FTM transsexuals are women, Raymond believes their lives to be a sad tale of misunderstanding their feminine power and potential, resulting in them relinquishing their femininity and becoming male.²⁴⁹ FTM transsexuals are "ultimate weapons in the hands of the boys". Raymond argues that the institutions play these subjects as get-out-of-jail-free cards. The institution sees the FTM subject as a woman willingly choosing to become one of them. For Raymond, these women's "collusion crosses a critical boundary", a boundary from which they are "truly 'the lost women' to other women".²⁵⁰ The FTM transsexual will never be able to identify with another woman ever again. Unlike the act of MTF transsexualism, Raymond does not believe FTM transsexualism to be an act of hatred toward the opposite biological sex.²⁵¹ FTM transsexualism is not a misandrous act; it is an act of misunderstanding feminine potential and power. The FTM transsexuals are doomed to live lives of anxiety – anxiety caused by the fear of being "unmasked" and exposed as imposters through a series of surgical shortcomings that limit them and prevent them from passing effectively.²⁵²

243 Penny, L. *Female Eunuch 40 years on*, Published: (27.10.2010)
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/booksblog/2010/oct/27/female-eunuch-40-years-on>

244 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 86

245 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. xiii

246 Ibid. 102-103

247 Ibid. xxiv and 27

248 Ibid. 27

249 Ibid. xxiv

250 Ibid. xxv

251 Ibid. 28

252 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 37: One of these surgically related "outing" anxieties include "toilet trauma". "Toilet trauma" is the anxiety experienced by FTM transsexuals when placed in a public lavatory environment, urinals. In the 1970s FTM surgery had not accomplished, without serious complications, enabling the individual to urinate through the penis. The FTM transsexual's urethra was positioned behind the constructed penis, meaning urination had to still be completed in the feminine position, seated. This exposure of incorrect anatomy caused the traumatic experience - "toilet trauma."

Raymond opens *The Transsexual Empire* by defining sex in her first chapter. This definition is given in order to help answer the question: is it at all possible to change 'sex' to "transsex"?²⁵³ Her definition is reliant upon John Money's "The Six Sexes".²⁵⁴ From this defining process she assesses that it is not physically possible to cross sex. She reaches this conclusion on account of the current impossibility to change chromosomal sex. From this chromosomal definition, Raymond asserts that all women must be chromosomally female: XX.²⁵⁵

The chromosomal definition of female gender is also used by Greer in her arguments surrounding Complete Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (CAIS) individuals' categorisation as female.²⁵⁶ Greer's reference to these individuals is in regards to their categorisation as female being inappropriate; Greer argues that although a CAIS individual appears physically more feminine than masculine they should not be classified as female. The classification 'female' is made due to both their lack of penis, un-descended or castrated-at-birth testicular condition and in spite of their lack of both womb and ovaries.²⁵⁷ Greer asserts "What CAIS babies are is not female but feminine".²⁵⁸ She continues: "The indubitable femininity of sleek-bodied AIS (Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome) females proves as nothing else could that femininity has nothing to do with sex."²⁵⁹ This argument is outlined in *The Whole Woman*, in the chapter 'Pantomime Dames'. Unlike Raymond, Greer dissects what is medically considered to be female – or more specifically, how the medical profession categorises non-males.²⁶⁰ She argues that the female sex is treated more as a catch-all sex than one defined by it's own criterion.²⁶¹ She concludes, the medical definition of female is one used to describe failed males. Raymond does not follow this line of enquiry into the categorisation of subjects which are neither male or female.

Returning to Raymond – and a view shared by Daly – who draws parallels between transvestitism and transsexualism. For Raymond, transsexuals are masochistic transvestites, requiring the infliction of pain to assert their change of gender as something more than superficial. They require the pain of surgery to validate their transfer from one gender to another.²⁶² This sweeping categorisation of transsexual and transvestite as one and the same is a source of much

253 Ibid. 6

254 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 6: John Money's Six Sexes are a definitional tool to assess the possibility of biological crossing of sex. These six sexes are: Chromosomal Sex, Anatomical or Morphological Sex, Genital or Gonadal Sex, Legal Sex, Endocrine or Hormonal sex and Psychological Sex.

255 Ibid 11

256 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 86: CAIS individuals are male (XY), but during in utero gestation the foetus does not respond to androgens and does not develop external genitalia. As a result C/AIS babies are usually assumed female until investigation later in life which exposes their XY constitution.

257 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 86

258 Ibid 87

259 Ibid 87

260 Ibid 85 - 86

261 Ibid 86

262 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979.144

criticism for Raymond, from the likes of Judith Butler and the post-operative MTF transsexual theorist, Carol Riddell.²⁶³ The difference between the two terms, transsexual and transvestite, is very important to Butler. Though little reference is made to transsexualism in *Gender Trouble*, entire swathes of text are dedicated to transvestism/cross-dressing or, more specifically, drag. It could be speculated that the reason Butler does not engage fully with transsexualism is due to the consequences a Butlerian reading of the condition would produce. A Butlerian reading would problematise two of the conditions: hetero-normative femininity and the belief held by some transsexuals that they are born a woman in a man's body. As Greer puts it, "Sex change surgery is profoundly conservative in that it reinforces sharply-contrasting gender roles by shaping individuals to fit them."²⁶⁴ What is meant by this is that the gender performativity of transsexuals adheres to and enforces the hetero-normative matrix. MTF transsexuals' behaviour is stereotypically feminine – it needs to be for two reasons: firstly to assure surgery is granted (we will come to this shortly) and secondly because subjects believe themselves to be feminine and behave so – this behaviour conforms to stereotyped hetero-normative femininity. Some transsexuals, like Jay Prosser, reject the notion of performativity, arguing that transsexuals aspire to a non-performative constative identity.²⁶⁵ This notion of a gendered identity that just *is*, trapped in the body of the opposite sex, is counter to the arguments that Butler puts forward. The argument does not take into account gender as a social construction and it essentialises femininity. Butler would not agree with this idea, as there can be no term, notion or essence that is intelligible before culture. In Butlerian terms there can be no congenital gendered essence.

On the other hand, Butler uses transvestism/cross dressing/drag as an exemplar tool, which features heavily in *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter*. Whilst transsexualism is only briefly touched upon in both *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter*, the subject is given more attention in *Undoing Gender* (2004). *Undoing Gender* features a chapter entitled 'Longing for Recognition', which analyses the work of Jessica Benjamin and culminates with an application of Butler's reading of Benjamin in reference to the film *Boys Don't Cry*.²⁶⁶ *Boys Don't Cry* is based on a true story and follows the journey of an FTM non-operative transsexual, Brandon Teena and the exposure of his secret, which leads to retributive rape by his peers and his subsequent murder.²⁶⁷ Butler critiques particular parts of the film – specifically the main protagonist and his girlfriend's portrayal of sex.²⁶⁸ By the end, Butler questions the motivations of the portrayed character:

Brandon's crossing involves a constant dare posed to the public norms of the culture, and so occupies a more public site on the continuum of transgender. It is not simply about being able to have sex a certain way, but also

263 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011.86

264 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 81 - 82

265 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 142

266 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 194-203, Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 84-97 and Butler, J. *Undoing Gender*, Routledge, New York, 2004. 131-151

267 Peirce, K. *Boys Don't Cry*, 20th Century Fox, 1999.

268 Butler, J. *Undoing Gender*, Routledge, New York, 2004. 142-143

about appearing as a masculine gender. So in a sense, Brandon is no lesbian despite the fact the film, caving in, wants to return him to that status after the rape, implying that the return to (achievement of?) lesbianism is somehow facilitated by that rape, returning Brandon, as the rapists sought to do, to a 'true' feminine identity that 'comes to terms' with anatomy.²⁶⁹

Butler goes on to explain that this "coming to terms' with anatomy" is the acceptance of cultural norms, and as a result produces a 'woman', even allowing for "the desire to be queer".²⁷⁰ Butler speculates one could argue that Brandon Teena's character only wished to be publicly considered male in order to give legitimacy to his sexual relations. However, the problem with this is that it makes gender instrumental for sexuality. Butler believes that sexuality and gender were not so clear-cut for Brandon Teena: "...gender has its own pleasures for Brandon, and serves its own purposes. These pleasure of identification exceed those of desire, and, in that sense, Brandon is not only or easily a lesbian."²⁷¹

Moving to transvestitism – or from now on, drag; Butler considers drag performance an important tool. It enables the construction of her argument that drag exposes "the relationship of primary identification – that is, the original meanings accorded to gender – and subsequent gender experience might be reframed."²⁷² Butler believes that drag performance – when the performance plays upon the anatomy of the performer and its distinction from the gender being performed by that body – can expose three contingent dimensions of significant corporeality: anatomical sex, gender identity and gender performance.²⁷³ This said, if there is no way to understand the performance, or if the audience is unaware of the communication, the parody is lost. A parodic performance by itself is not subversive; the performance relies on the audience's knowledge of the performance and original context to interpret the parody – without either, the subversive message is lost.²⁷⁴

For Raymond, Daly and Greer, all MTF performance is misogynistic and an appropriation of femininity – the MTF subjects themselves are misogynist. Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* tracks the misogyny and notes that it runs deeper than the performing subject; the heart of the misogyny of transsexualism is the medical institution: "The Transsexual Empire is basically the medical conglomerate that has created the treatment and technology that makes anatomical sex conversion possible."²⁷⁵ The medical conglomerate is Raymond's Empire.

Raymond argues that instead of surgery motivated by compassion, "Transsexual surgery is a form of behaviour modification and control which is allowed conditionally, if transsexuals accept and learn to present themselves in

269 Ibid 143

270 Ibid 143

271 Ibid144

272 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 187

273 Ibid 187

274 Ibid189

275 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. xiv and xv

terms of patriarchally approved stereotypes.”²⁷⁶ Since surgeons cannot create ‘real women’ they instead create “pastiche, which are trained to be models of the kind of women men would like to see”; transsexuals are the creations of what Greer and Daly would call ‘Male Mothers’.²⁷⁷

Daly writes in more depth regarding male mothering than Raymond. They both agree that men envy women’s “creative power”, possessing a “womb envy” and as a result seek to create their own babies in their work.²⁷⁸ But Daly, unlike Raymond, looks beyond transsexuals alone to the medical institution and to the impact technology will have upon gender, where women will fit into her predicted “space of stale male-mating.”²⁷⁹ Both Daly and Raymond agree the entire pastiche-creation (of the transsexual) process is supported by a complex medical institutional infrastructure, centred around patriarchal “means of social control of gender stereotypes, which act in the interests of men.”²⁸⁰ According to Raymond, this infrastructure of psychologists, urologists, gynaecologists, endocrinologists, plastic surgeons, etc. is entirely based on curing, or a “therapeutic necessity” to alleviate the “created” psychological disease of Gender Dysphoria.²⁸¹ Raymond argues, in a Foucaultian style (similar to The Perverse Implantation explained in the first chapter), that Gender Dysphoria is the result of the “entomologising” of non-normative gender and sexual behaviour.²⁸² Raymond herself does not recognise these observed biopolitical Foucaultian parallels. In her observed creation of Gender Dysphoria, non-normative sexual behaviour was studied, recorded and statistics were collated, from which experts arose and the creation of the Gender Clinics occurred. This history is not one that Riddell agrees with; she argues that the creation of the clinics was in response to a need, not the institution that created that need.²⁸³ Either way, the Gender Clinics established medical facts of the condition, a language and methods of treatment. Raymond argues that the treatment is not for the benefit of the transsexual subject; in its guise of therapy the treatment is instead motivated to realign the subject back to conformity – to the patriarchally established and accepted modes of gendered behaviour via amendment of the performing body.²⁸⁴ As a result, the transsexual and their treatment serve to proliferate the gendered sex roles. Raymond purposefully avoids the term ‘Gender Dysphoria’

276 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 174

277 Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. 17 and 58-61 and Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 172

278 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 29: Womb envy, a term coined by Karen Horney following her work regarding reversing Freud’s theorisations on penis envy.

279 Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. 52

280 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 172

281 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. xv

282 Foucault, M. *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge: v. 1*, Penguin; New edition, London, 1998. 43 Entomologising is a term used by Foucault to describe the collection, cataloging and naming of normative and non-normative sexual behaviour: “all those minor perverts whom nineteenth century psychiatrists entomologised by giving them strange baptismal names”

283 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 176

284 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 131

as she finds it purposefully obscure – a medical term designed to hide the social and ethical issues that transsexualism raises.²⁸⁵

Raymond believes that a desire to mutilate the occupied body in order to signify the opposite sex warrants the transsexual condition to be more accurately described as androgynous.²⁸⁶ For Raymond, a qualification of androgyny is a lack of “integrity”. She sees integrity as “an original wholeness from which no part can be taken away.”²⁸⁷ Raymond believes that transsexual’s lack integrity – a quality inherent within all biological women. Whilst the clinics seek to integrate the transsexual into their new gendered role (Raymond defines integration as to put together via a series of parts to achieve a completeness or wholeness), no matter what they do they cannot give the subject the integrity they desire.²⁸⁸ Raymond suggests that instead of the reconditioning and integration solutions the clinics engage in, they should be helping the individuals to “realise the integrity of their be-ing.”²⁸⁹

As a part of this integration, and in order for the transsexual to be considered for surgery, they must meet a set of deemed and institutionally set criteria: the aforementioned ‘patriarchally established accepted modes of gendered behaviour’.²⁹⁰ For the MTF transsexual, these criteria include living and passing as a woman. To meet these criteria, the transsexual must perform naturalistically or convincingly as a woman. It is here that Raymond observes the transsexual’s misogyny inherent in her subjectivity. The series of tasks the individual must perform are behaviourally reinforced. The behaviour is a stereotype of how women are expected to behave, and it is this criterion that the transsexual must adhere to in order to warrant surgery – this is the crux of the misogyny. Raymond argues that defined feminine behaviour is actually how men think or want women to behave.²⁹¹ The criteria the transsexual must adhere to is man’s ideal. The clinics ingrain the ideal within the transsexing subject women – withholding surgery and hormones until they conform.²⁹² Transsexuals who “pass” as women will be rewarded with a new body to match their passing efforts.²⁹³

In the chapter ‘Toward the Development of an Ethic of Integrity’, Raymond details how sex-role adherence by transsexuals has become essential to the process of “transsexing”. This adherence establishes the misogynistic expectations of the MTF woman, and it is this which has proliferated to impact on society as a whole. Raymond paints a very negative dystopian future, where the impact of MTF man-made women contributes to making women

285 Ibid 12

286 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 174

287 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 154

288 Ibid 154

289 Ibid 154

290 Ibid 131

291 Ibid xvi

292 Ibid 132

293 Ibid 133

unnecessary. Instead of emancipating biological females from biological child-rearing shackles – and consequently having them regarded as productively equal to men – Raymond foresees this female biological emancipation as detrimental, nullifying biological females and deeming them no longer necessary.²⁹⁴ This is a vision shared by Daly.²⁹⁵

Some of the MTF transsexuals who attempt to escape the misogynistic patriarchal feminising, turn instead to lesbian feminism movements.²⁹⁶ According to Raymond, on no account should these women be allowed to participate in these spaces. Not only are the MTF transsexual lesbian feminists still the result of misogynistically-saturated institutions, they are also the agents of it.²⁹⁷ Raymond strongly argues, that

...the transsexually constructed lesbian-feminist is able to deceptively act out the part of lesbian-feminist *because* he is a man with a man's history; that is he is free of many residues of self-hatred, self-depreciation, and self contradiction that attend female bodies – all communicated both subtly and not so subtly in gestures, body language and the like.²⁹⁸

Because the MTF transsexual has not matured as a woman, they have not experienced true womanhood or carried the scars of patriarchal oppression to prove it.²⁹⁹ As a consequence, MTF transsexuals cannot understand femininity and should not be allowed to participate.³⁰⁰ Raymond argues that their presence in this space is as an agent of the empiric institution, performing, as she puts it, "Total Rape".³⁰¹ Total Rape is the penetration of patriarchy, not only physically but psychically, upon the feminine mind. The MTF transsexual's presence penetrates the feminine space of the lesbian feminist group. Raymond states,

"The transsexually constructed lesbian-feminist, having castrated himself, turns his whole body and behaviour into a phallus that can rape in many ways, all the time. In this sense, he performs *total* rape, while also functioning totally against women's will to lesbian feminism."³⁰²

Resultantly, Raymond believes that the lesbian feminist groups who accept MTF transsexuals do so for one of a number of reasons: fear of being identified as man hating, liberalism (not wanting to appear intolerant), gratitude that

294 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 168 - 173 and Macey, D. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*. Penguin New Ed edition. London, 2004.129 - 130

295 Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. 17 and 60 - 61

296 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 173

297 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 105 - 106

298 Ibid 102 - 103

299 Ibid 103

300 Ibid 103

301 Ibid 112

302 Ibid 112

one of the members of the ruling sex have renounced their privileges and/or naivety.³⁰³ Either way, in allowing MTF transsexual participation within a lesbian feminist group or discourse, Raymond argues that the group are “mutilating their own reality”.³⁰⁴

Both Daly and Greer agree with Raymonds above claims. The above reference, quoted from *The Transsexual Empire*, was written as a result of conversations between Raymond and Daly. Greer agrees but opens the dialogue concerning the acceptance of MTF transsexuals into the female sex, stating, “No-one ever asked women if they recognised sex-change males as belonging to their sex or considered whether they were being obliged to accept MTF transsexuals as women was at all damaging for their identity or self esteem.”³⁰⁵

Carol Riddell’s critique of *The Transsexual Empire*, ‘Divided Sisterhood’, takes issue with Janice Raymond’s theorisations at numerous points; and as is evident from her writing, as a post-operative MTF transsexual woman, she is offended by the implicit accusation of Total Rape of her contemporaries by her presence and work in the field.³⁰⁶ Riddell categorically states, “The Transsexual Empire is a dangerous book. It is dangerous to transsexuals because it does not treat us as human beings at all, merely as the tools of theory.”³⁰⁷ Riddell’s opinion, that *The Transsexual Empire* endangered the social progress of transsexuals, is a view shared by Stephen Whittle, a FTM transsexual.³⁰⁸

Riddell’s criticisms extend to include an argument that the book is based entirely upon an unsupported assumption: the existence of a patriarchal gender system. This assumption remains unchallenged throughout. As mentioned, Riddell rejects Raymond’s view of transsexualism as a creation of the medical institutions, supporting her argument by questioning Raymond’s history of the institution. She argues that Raymond tells the wrong story of the development of the Gender Clinics and dismissal of FTM transsexuals as mere tokens.³⁰⁹ Riddell’s observation of Raymond’s

303 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 174

304 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 119

305 Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. 85

306 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 178

307 Ibid 184-185

308 Whittle, S. *Gender Fucking or Fucking Gender*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 207: In support of Riddell’s accusation of *The Transsexual Empire* being a dangerous book Stephen Whittle states “*The Transsexual Empire, The Making of the She-Male (1979)* discredited for a long time any academic voice they [the transsexual] might have, in particular, with feminist theorists. As a result of her[Raymond’s] work, feminists saw transsexuals as misguided and mistaken men seeking surgery to fulfil some imaginary notion of femininity, and further-more, upholding the gendered sex-role structure inherent in the patriarchal hegemony seeking to discredit feminist work.”

309 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 176 and Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. 68

dehumanisation of transsexuals is a fair one. Raymond argues about the constitution of women but at no point offers the same assessment of the transsexual, apart from as failure or lack: a subject without integrity.

In *Bodies that Matter*, in the chapter 'Gender is Burning', Butler refers to Raymond in regards to the social activist and commentator, bell hooks's critique of Jennie Livingston's documentary film, *Paris is Burning* (1990). Butler observes that by criticising some of the gay male productions demonstrated in *Paris is Burning* as misogynistic, bell hooks allied herself with Raymond and other feminist theorists who hold the same interpretation.³¹⁰ Butler singles out Raymond as a theorist who has strong views on drag being interpreted as only offering an offensive ridicule and degradation of women. She goes on to highlight Raymond's lack of definition between transsexualism and transvestitism: "Raymond, in particular, places drag on a continuum with cross-dressing and transsexualism, ignoring the important differences between them, maintaining that in each practice women are an object of hatred and appropriation, and that there is nothing in the identification that is respectful or elevating."³¹¹ Butler goes on to explain that the interpretation of MTF drag as only misogynistic, groups drag acts, transsexuality and cross-dressing as a homosexual activity – inferring that homosexuality itself is a misogynistic practice.³¹² This refocusing of homosexuality to centre it on the female, inadvertently re-inscribes the patriarchal heterosexual matrix to the centre of the radical feminist position. It infers that the homosexual man has failed at establishing a functioning relationship with a woman and so in turn hates them all indiscriminately. Butler believes that this argument could be applied in the same way to the homophobic dismissal of lesbian desire; the view that a lesbian is a lesbian due to her failing to meet the right man.³¹³ Butler clearly states that the radical feminist argument – that drag performances (and any MTF crossing of gender) is nothing more than a displacement and appropriation of "women" as a solely homosexual practice – is like the homophobic dismissal of lesbian desire.³¹⁴ The argument insinuates that both sexualities are rooted in a failure; failure to comply with the heterosexual matrix. Resultantly, the argument views both sexualities' desires as a consequence of hatred of the opposite sex – making them both misogynistic and misandrous.³¹⁵

The argument against homosexual and lesbian desire as a desire formulated in hatred is Butler's only direct engagement with Raymond within her publication. However, it is not the last place in which their theorisations diverge from one and other.

In the 1999 preface to the revised edition of *Gender Trouble*, Butler tackles criticisms concerning the lack of reference to transsexuality within the book, and uses it as an opportunity to confirm the distinction between transvestitism and transsexuality. In its original publication, *Gender Trouble* makes reference to transsexuality only once. The reference is

310 Ibid 86
311 Ibid 86
312 Ibid 86
313 Ibid 86
314 Ibid 86
315 Ibid 87

in regards to the satisfaction of transsexual's sexual appetites via phantasmic construction of pleasure through imagined genitals and projection:

Transsexuals often claim a radical discontinuity between sexual pleasure and bodily parts. Very often what is wanted in terms of pleasure requires imaginary participation in body parts, either appendages or orifices, that one might not actually possess, or, similarly, pleasure may require imagining an exaggerated or diminished set of parts. The imaginary status of desire of course is not restricted to the transsexual identity; the phantasmic nature of the body not as its ground or cause but as its *occasion* and its *object*.³¹⁶

In the revised preface, Butler states that it is no longer possible to derive a judgement on a subject's anatomical make-up based upon clothes alone – clothes that “cover and articulate” the body.³¹⁷ She makes this point specifically in reference to cross-dressing:

Perhaps we think we know what the anatomy of the person is (sometimes we do not, and we certainly have not appreciated the variation that exists at the level of anatomical description). Or we derive that knowledge from the clothes that the person wears, or how the clothes are worn. This is naturalized knowledge, even though it is based on a series of cultural inferences, some of which are highly erroneous. Indeed, if we shift the example from drag to transsexuality, then it is no longer possible to derive a judgment about stable anatomy from the clothes that cover and articulate the body. That body may be preoperative, transitional, or postoperative; even “seeing” the body may not answer the question: for what are the categories through which one sees?³¹⁸

When an onlooking subject is presented with a cross-dressing individual, the usual social conventions no longer serve to convey meaning about the anatomical make-up of the body beneath the clothes; the transsexual's body may be preoperative, transitional or post-operative. The clothing's cultural signification loses meaning in regards to anatomical make-up when applied to the transsexual. It is this cultural failing of perception – the failure to categorise the body as either male or female – which mimics the experience of the transsexual. The subject's body “vacillates” between the two categories.³¹⁹

Moving on from direct reference, in application of Butler's theorisations of denaturalisation of sex from the body and the use of performativity to convey meaning, it is possible to expose contradictions within *The Transsexual Empire*.

To reiterate, Butler argues femininity to be a social construct – a culmination of discursive effects. These discursive effects culturally permit the sex of the subject. The inscription of these effects on to physicality gives the subject's sex a

316 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 96

317 Ibid xxiv

318 Ibid xxiv

319 Ibid xxiv

gendered meaning and enables cultural comprehension. From this, two clear arguments are produced. Firstly, gender precedes sex – it enables sex to be articulated and understood. Secondly, gender is performatively communicated – it is a series of actions, the norms of which are dictated by cultural compulsions. Thus, as gender is performative and precedes sex, sex is also performative. Sex is “doing” not “being”. For Butler, a woman is the result of discourse.³²⁰

Like Butler, Raymond argues that femininity is artificial: “to feminise or masculinise into a cultural identity and role is to socialise one into a constructed identity or role.”³²¹ Sex, is defined by a number of natural and social factors, but in essence, woman is defined by one unchangeable factor: her chromosomal assignment.³²² For Raymond, a woman is one who was born with an XX chromosomal make-up and who is “encumbered by the scars of patriarchy”. A woman becomes what she is, based on the restrictions her biology implies – she is as much her history as she is her body.³²³ From a Butlerian reading, she is a result of the discourse her form inspires.

In the first chapter, I explicated the Butlerian argument that the de Beauvoirian notion of ‘becoming gender’ gives rise to the idea that a subject’s gender was always incomplete and in a perpetual state of evolution.³²⁴ Upon Butler’s investigation into this evolving state of womanliness, she exposed a “radical discontinuity” between sex and gender, female and woman:

If gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. Assuming for the moment the stability of binary sex, it does not follow that the construction of ‘men’ will accrue exclusively to the body of males or that ‘women’ will interpret only female bodies. Further, even if the sexes appear to be binary in their morphology and constitution (which will become a question), there is no reason to assume that genders ought to remain as two.³²⁵

For Butler, gender is “the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” This repeated stylisation inscribes itself upon the body to give sex meaning, specifically creating the body.³²⁶ It’s important to note here that gender gives sex meaning, gender enables intelligibility. As in the second chapter, that does not mean that there is no body before gender, only that the body comes into cultural existence when made intelligible with the marks of gender.

320 Ibid 34

321 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London, 1979. 3

322 Ibid 3 and 6-7

323 Ibid 103

324 Zadjermann, P. *Judith Butler: Philosophical Encounters of the Third Kind*. (via Youtube 23.05.2011 part 2/6)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTz-_YeUIUg&feature=related : 26.06.11 – 7mins 25 secs.

325 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 9

326 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 45 and Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*: Continuum. London, 2006. 69

The gendering process is not a matter of free will – there is no essential subject in existence to make that choice. The subject is a collection of discursive effects; effects formed by the gender discourse. Raymond agrees that femininity is a social construct, however, unlike Butler, she separates gender from sex. Raymond goes further and categorises gender into two types: artificially “integrated” femininity and the phenomenological “integrity”.³²⁷ To reiterate, Raymond sees integrity as “an original wholeness from which no part can be taken away”; integrity is a feminine essence that the female body inherently possesses and which cannot be taught or imitated.³²⁸ As in the last chapter, terms can only be understood after culture, so integrity can only be comprehensible following assignment of cultural meaning, thus “integrity” means nothing before the application of cultural signification. Raymond’s “integrity” relies upon cultural construction, to both signify the meaning it has been assigned and to be comprehended. To apply the Kirby-style convention of terms after culture: integrity becomes ~~integrity~~.³²⁹

As bodies are interpreted using the same culturally saturated methods, Raymond’s natural or biological womanhood is also subject to the same reduction. Her reliance upon the XX chromosomal definition of woman has the same problematic construction as femininity/gender – XX is arguably ~~XX~~.³³⁰ All of John Money’s “Six Sexes” that Raymond uses to define the ability to transsex are understood post-culturally. What XX means and the decision to use chromosomes as a sex-defining category is the result of institutional discourse. What is known about the category XX is a result of the collection of research; statistics; which areas were funded for research; what was taught in schools, colleges and universities, enabling researchers and doctors to study and practice; and also what was not – what was ignored in the medical field. Raymond’s chosen tool of categorisation is a term dictated by the misogynistic empire she fights against.

However, in regards to Raymond’s “integrity”, the phenomenological force which governs femininity, this too cannot exist outside of cultural signification. The phenomenological force is another formation of discursive practice, so to again use the Kirby style after culture convention: ~~integrity~~. As Riddell observes:

Ms Raymond talks of the ‘multidimensional female creative power, bearing culture, harmony and true inventiveness’ that transsexual women are supposed to covet. Where do these characteristics come from? They are not biological [Raymond attacks such a suggestion made by another theorist]. Perhaps there is some ‘woman spirit’ or ‘woman energy’, underlying biology which has the above characteristics. But if so, then the transsexual women may have it, though they have male biology, and all Ms Raymond’s arguments fall. Alternatively, these characteristics are social in origin.³³¹

327 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 154

328 Ibid 154

329 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*: Continuum. London, 2006. 69

330 Ibid 69

331 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 185

In a Butlerian reading, in either of the options offered by Riddell, this “integrity” is a discursive effect, a social construction in either guise. This means that Raymond’s female integrity could be re-appropriated; though not as an integration but as full integrity by a non-female subject. Raymond’s argument, that only women who have “become” women naturally can participate in the lesbian feminist environments, cannot hold true. Her becoming notion is defined both socially and biologically and stands as a prerequisite for participation. She argues that the transsexual cannot validly operate in a lesbian feminist space:

“...precisely *because* the transsexually constructed lesbian feminist is a man, and not a woman encumbered with the scars of patriarchy that are unique to a woman’s personal and social history that he can play our parts so convincingly and apparently better than we can play them ourselves.”³³²

If the status of woman is conditionally understood after culture, Raymond’s above criteria cannot bar a transsexual from entering the lesbian feminist space.

Thus, a Butlerian interpretation of the transsexual body is that it is, like any other body, a discursive effect moulded by cultural compulsions. The gender of the subject is repeated stylisations upon the body, however the inscription of gender upon the sexed body is disjointed with physicality. The MTF transsexual is stylistically female but the cultural meaning ascribed to the subject’s sexual characteristics are disjointed from the individual’s performativity. The individual requires surgical intervention to align their body with their performativity. As Garber observes “[in the case of a specific transsexual] actual gender identification precedes the surgical makeover by many years”.³³³ Unlike the transvestite, the transsexual desires the body of the opposite sex, not the gender – they already possess the gender. In the second chapter, I went on to expand on the creation of the ~~body~~ by explaining how sex and gender are implicit of one another (“sex by definition, will be shown to have been gender all along”), and I had established gender as a social construct that consequently led to sex becoming understood as also unnatural/constructed.³³⁴ I continued to detail how, according to Butler, the body acquires its gender: “...the body becomes its gender through a series of acts which are renewed, revised, and consolidated through time”. Again, this is no different for the transsexual – apart from the fact that their gender does not fully inscribe upon their physicality. Surgical intervention is required to complete the process of inscription, “the task (or art) of the surgeon [is to] refashion the body to suit the subjectivity.”³³⁵

332 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women’s Press Ltd. London. 1979. 103

333 Garber, M. *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, Penguin, London, 1992. 100

334 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 11 and *Salih, S. Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 46

335 Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40,1988. 523 and Garber, M. *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, Penguin, London, 1992. 102

Raymond argues that women are born female (XX) and then, as a result of inhabiting this female body from birth, are scarred by patriarchal oppression and resultantly become women.³³⁶ Raymond's subject is but like de Beauvoir's, 'becomes'. As Raymond's subject also 'becomes', Butler's already-convincingly-established arguments surrounding the order of sex and gender can be re-articulated upon Raymond's theorisations. Raymond's woman is born female – the term female bears gendered meaning. How that subject's subjectivity is defined is based on that initial gendering process. What it means to be defined as female affects the way the subject is interpreted, both sexually and in the expectations of the gender. As a result of the sexing of the infant, the marks of gender – in a Freudian sense – both inscribe the sex and introject the gender. When applied to the MTF transsexual, this process is as follows: a male is born, the male infant identifies with a female, and this identification introjects a female gender onto the male subject. The introjection initiates the process of the gender inscribing upon the body, creating a female subject in a male form.³³⁷ This process is no different for the MTF transsexual than Raymond's female subject. However, due to the chromosomal difference, Raymond argues that the transsexual woman has no access to the personal and social history of womanliness, excluding her from feminine spaces.³³⁸ This personal and social history – the history of all women – is a universal claim. In the second chapter, universal claims of femininity were discussed and quashed on the grounds of cultural context. Raymond's inclusion of a culturally contextual and conditional factor to her requirements discredits the universalistic principle, meaning her notion of woman fluctuates depending on social order. Raymond's woman becomes an unstable construct. Raymond fails to specify how deeply the woman needs to be encumbered by the patriarchal order to be accepted to the lesbian feminist order, or for how long she needs to be encumbered to be considered sufficiently experienced. By this omission, the transsexual could pass validly into this space after extensive experience, whilst occupying a feminine form. As raised by Butler in *Gender Trouble*, the body of the transsexual is one which it is impossible to derive an anatomical make-up judgement on based on clothes.³³⁹ So, the gendered clothing's articulation upon the body and the procedural feminine preening could give the passing interpretation of femininity. The transsexual could pass effectively and experience patriarchal oppression whilst in the body of a male.

Raymond's causes of transsexualism are not related to identification, but instead to the patriarchal societies' dictated sex-defined roles – Raymond believes that transsexuals, like women, hate their bodies and cannot accept the role that has been dictated as theirs. So they change their sex to change their role – a change encouraged by the surgical profession for their own ends: to advance surgical capabilities and to infiltrate feminine spaces. Raymond believes that removing all sex-role stereotyping behaviour will stop the requirement for sex reassignment surgery, and instead suggests counselling and consciousness-raising techniques to help the confused individual.³⁴⁰

336 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 103

337 Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers : Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition. London 2002. 53

338 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 103

339 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. xxvi

340 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 175

However, if the fix Raymond poses is implemented, what will the consciousness raising expose? If integrity is constructed – only interpreted after culture, only given meaning via patriarchal signification – the integrity can be appropriated. The integrity can exist in the subjectivity with a non-matching sexed body. As Butler argues, the subject acquires its identity – both sex and gender – which for Butler is complicit via identification, inscription and introjection. From this standpoint, if as argued in the first chapter the subject becomes the object of its desire, the act of transsexualism cannot be one of hate.³⁴¹

Everything the transsexual signifies, as with any subject, is only intelligible after culture. All the symbols they display are the result of a patriarchal economy. Riddell observes, “Raymond is trying to destroy a monster by focusing on his little toe.”³⁴² The entire signifying economy is patriarchy based. Focussing on **one** form of transsexualism and **one** institution is too narrow and fails to see the exercise of this economy on gender as a whole; the fabrication of gender to reinforce a heterosexual matrix.³⁴³ This is a matrix which Raymond’s arguments encourage, by supporting the treatment of transsexual subjects, by helping them rediscover their “integrity”. This term is a reflection of sex-role culture: a defined maleness and femaleness.³⁴⁴

341 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 79

342 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond’s Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 178

343 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 41

344 Ibid 42

In conclusion, in this dissertation I argued against the view held by some feminists, such as Raymond, Daly and Greer, that the MTF transsexual is inherently misogynistic. I did so by applying the Butlerian theories of denaturalised sex and performativity to the reading of sex and gender. This application destabilised the definition of woman when based upon an unintelligible natural foundation. With the foundation of woman questioned and argued as only existing after culture, the feminist belief that the transsexual is inherently misogynistic also destabilised, as they too are read as a culmination of discursive effects. The value given to the sex, female, was argued to be the result of a hetero-normative binary matrix – this framework giving validity to some bodies and denying others. This means that the female body and feminine space that some feminists argue transsexuals encroach upon were proven to be a cultural construct, and thus not innately owned by any sex or gender. With no innately owned space, the transsexual does not trespass into any ‘essential’ gender or sex. The argument was approached in three parts: the first chapter explicated Butler’s argument, the second defended her position and the third and final expounded the feminist view of transsexualism and misogyny, using Raymond’s *The Transsexual Empire*, supported by Greer and Daly, and critiqued by Riddell. This expounding was then reviewed, following the application of Butler’s performativity and denaturalised sex; questioning assumed terms such as woman and the implication of this definition when based on chromosomal factors.

In greater detail, the first chapter explicated Butler’s theories regarding sex and gender, as detailed in her publications *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter*. This explication was supported by a brief explanation of the terms and importance of the Foucault. These terms included discourse, truth and genealogy.³⁴⁵ This explanation of the aforementioned terms included the creation of normalisation procedures within societies and the discipline methods and judicial power behind enforcing their adherence.³⁴⁶ As a part of expounding the importance of Foucault to Butlerian work regarding sex and gender, language as a method of both discipline and understanding subjectivity was assessed.

Using the Vicky Kirby-style tool of describing terms after culture, I was enabled to communicate Butler’s understanding of physicality. Butler has stated in *Bodies that Matter* that she did not deny the presence of a physical world, and subsequently, a physical body. She observed a world outside of discourse, however she argued this world was not comprehensible; the human condition of understanding in terms of language disallowed it.³⁴⁷ Kirby explains:

...we need to appreciate here that Butler has actually drawn a line of clarification between a realm of knowledge and political contestation, namely Culture, and what pre-exists it – Nature (now more accurately represented as

345 Foucault, M. *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. v. 3 Penguin 3 edition. Edited by James D. Faubion. London, 2002. 81-85

346 Foucault, M. *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*: v. 1, Penguin; New edition, London 1998. 135–159

347 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011 iix

'under erasure', or crossed out – ~~Nature~~). Thus, Butler's critique of inseparability and contamination of nature and culture as concepts is founded upon an absolute separation of ~~matter/Nature~~ and culture/ideality.³⁴⁸

Following this definition of comprehension of all terms following culture, Performativity was defined. Performativity was explained to be the process by which the unintelligible comes to bear meaning, "the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being."³⁴⁹

With the argument that there can be no comprehension of a pure sex before culture – and gender is the cultural understanding of what the sexed body means – the ordering of sex and gender was examined. It was observed that Butler questioned that if gender follows the identification of the physical form, then how is it capable of inscribing meaning upon that sex?³⁵⁰ As Butler explains in *Gender Trouble*, "if gender is the cultural meaning that the sexed body assumes, then gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way."³⁵¹

This moved on to include Butler's reading on Freud, which questions his assumption of heterosexual identification of the infant subject, offering her own interpretation of both introjection and incorporation. This Freudian analysis was followed by a review of Butler's use of Derrida. A brief explanation of Différance outlined how a sign acquires its meaning in relation to other signs, which lead to an explanation of Butler's more extensive use of the theory of Citation. Citation is a method Butler used to develop her theories surrounding the subversion of gender via drag performance. The use of drag for a tool of subversion was explained, however drag's parodic performance within particular social groups as an uncritical reflection of sex-role stereotypes was acknowledged.

In the second chapter, Butler's claim that both sex and gender are subject to, and constructed by, culture was defended – particularly Butlerian arguments concerning the construction of the body and its performative ~~nature~~. Three of Butler's critics and contemporaries were focused upon: Diana Fuss, Martha Nussbaum and Toril Moi, whose arguments suggested Butler's theorisations were: sophisticated essentialisms, misrepresentations of real women by dismissal of innate agency and denial of physical matter and its distinctions, and finally, a sacrifice of matter via reduction to linguistic representation. Butler's theorisations were defended by re-iteration and expansion of points made in the first chapter and through explanation of key terms in context to their misreading.

The final chapter used Janice Raymond's publication, *The Transsexual Empire: the making of the she-male* to demonstrate arguments regarding the view held by some feminists that the act of male to female (MTF)

348 Kirby, V. *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*: Continuum. London, 2006. 69

349 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 45

350 Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. 32

351 Butler, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. 9

transsexualism is a misogynistic one.³⁵² This demonstration was supported by Germaine Greer and Mary Daly when required. The demonstration was critiqued throughout by Carol Riddell. Following my detailing of Raymond's argument, Butler's defended theorisations surrounding the de-naturalisation of sex from the body and the performativity were applied. In doing this it was possible to demonstrate how Raymond's assumed terms were cultural constructs, and this destabilised her ~~natural~~ foundation. The term and concept of woman was proven to be as culturally constructed as the transsexual, both genders formed in a patriarchal signifying economy.

As argued, everything the transsexual signifies, as with any subject, is only intelligible after culture. All the signifiers the transsexuals communicate are a result of the patriarchal economy. Riddell observes, "Raymond is trying to destroy a monster by focusing on his little toe."³⁵³ The entire signifying economy is patriarchy based, not just the medical-transsexual-creating faction.

It was also observed that Raymond's treatment for transsexuals (or to use the medical term, Gender Dysphoria), of counselling and consciousness-raising techniques, to help the confused individual rediscover their 'integrity', reinforced the synthetic gender and the heterosexual matrix instead of helping the individual realise their essential gender.³⁵⁴ Raymond's 'integrity' is a social construct formulated by the heterosexual matrix, by supporting the treatment of transsexual subjects by helping them rediscover their 'integrity' – a term which is a reflection of sex-role culture: a defined maleness and femaleness.

To conclude, I have argued that both genders, and implicitly, sex is culturally constructed. Both are formulated in, and as a result of, the patriarchal signifying economy. Therefore, I would suggest it is possible to consider woman to be as inherently misogynist as the MTF transsexual.

352 Butler, J. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. 86

353 Riddell, C. *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's Transsexual Empire*, Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. 178

354 Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*. The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. 154

Bindel, J. The ugly side of beauty, Published: (02.07.2005)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/jul/02/gender.politicsphilosophyandsociety> (14.09.2011)

Article

Bornstein, K. *Gender outlaw: on men, women, and the rest of us*, Routledge, New York, 1994. Print

Boucher, G. The Politics of Performativity: A Critique of Judith Butler, Issued 2006

http://www.parrhesiajournal.org/parrhesia01/parrhesia01_boucher.pdf (08.08.2011) Journal

Bristow, J. *Sexuality (New Critical Idiom)*, Routledge; 2 edition, Abingdon, 2010. Print

Burgin, V. Donald, J and Kaplan, C. *Formations of Fantasy*, Methuen, London, 1986. Print

Butler, J. *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*, Theatre Journal, Vol. 40, (Dec 1988) pg 519-531 JSTOR Journal

“ *Undoing Gender*, Routledge, New York, 2004. Print

“ *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge New edition. New York 2006. Print

“ *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge Classics)*: Routledge; 1 edition: 4. New York 2011. Print

Crowley, S. *Reader Response: Judith Butler, Professor of Rhetoric, JAC*

<http://www.engl.unt.edu/~kjensen/practice/jaconline/archives/vol21.1/crowley-butler.pdf> (27.07.2011) Journal

Daly, M. *Gyn/ecology, the metaethics of radical feminism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978. Print

de Beauvoir, S. *The Second Sex*, Four Square Books Second Volume, 1960. Print

Deutscher, P. *How to Read Derrida*, Granta Books, London, 2005. Print

Ekins, R and King, D. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex-changing*, Routledge, London 1996. Print

Epstein, B. *Postmodernism and the Left*, <http://ww3.wpunj.edu/newpol/issue22/epstei22.htm> (03.08.2011) Journal

Foucault, M, *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought (Penguin Social Sciences) Penguin*; New edition London, 1991. Print

“ *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge: v. 1*, Penguin; New edition, London, 1998. Print

“ *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984. v. 3*, Penguin 3 edition. Edited by James D. Faubion. London, 2002. Print

Fuss, D. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, Routledge, New York, 1989. Print

Garber, M. *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, Penguin, London, 1992. Print

Greer, G. *The Whole Woman*, Random House, London 2007. Print

“ *Caster Semenya sex row: What makes a woman?* Published: (10.08.2009)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2009/aug/20/germaine-greer-caster-semenya> (15.08.2011) Article

Halberstam, J. *Female Masculinity*, Duke University Press, United States, 1998. Print

Haraway, D. *Simians, cyborgs, and women: the reinvention of nature, Part 7*, Free Association Books, London 1991. Print

Irigaray, L. *Je, Tu, Nous. Towards a Culture of Difference*. Routledge; New edition, London 2007. Print

Jeffreys, S. *Beauty and Misogyny: Harmful Cultural Practices of the West*, Routledge, Hove, 2005. Print

Kirby, V. *Telling Flesh: The Substance of the Corporeal*, Routledge 1 edition, New York, 1997. Print

“ *Judith Butler (Live Theory)*, Continuum, London, 2006. Print

Krafft- Ebing. R, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Stein and Day Publishers, Unknown, 1899. Print

Livingstone, J. *Paris is Burning*, Miramax Films, 1990. Film

Lloyd, M. *Judith Butler: Norms to Politics*. Polity, Cambridge, 2007. Print

Macey, D. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*, Penguin New Ed edition, London, 2004. Print

Nussbaum, M. *Professor of Parody* ,The New Republic Online, Issued 22.02.1999 <http://www.tnr.com/index.mhtml> (08.08.2011) Journal

Peirce, K. *Boys Don't Cry*, 20th Century Fox, 1999. Film

Penny, L. *Female Eunuch 40 years on*, Published: (27.10.2010)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/booksblog/2010/oct/27/female-eunuch-40-years-on> (01.09.2011) Article

Prosser, J. *Second skins: the body narratives of transsexuality*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1998. Print

Raymond, J. G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-male*, The Women's Press Ltd. London. 1979. Print

Salih, S. *Routledge Critical Thinkers: Judith Butler*. Routledge; annotated edition, London, 2002. Print

Samuels, R. *Between Philosophy and Psychoanalysis: Lacan's reconstruction of Freud*, Routledge, 1993. Print.

Whittle, S *The Transgender Debate: The Crisis Surrounding Gender Identity*, South Street Press, Reading, 2000. Print

Zadjermann, P. *Judith Butler: Philosophical Encounters of the Third Kind*. Icarus Films. Release Date: 2007. (via Youtube 23.05.2011) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jtz-YeUIUg&feature=related> Film

Žižek, S. *How to Read Lacan*, Granta Books, London, 2006. Print

With thanks also to Jess and Tom.

For waiting behind scenes ready to catch me if I fell.