



HAL
open science

Beyond the Barricade: Adolescents Rehearsing and Performing Masculinities in Music Theatre

Robert Legg

► **To cite this version:**

Robert Legg. Beyond the Barricade: Adolescents Rehearsing and Performing Masculinities in Music Theatre. Publije, 2018, Les cultures ado : consommation et production. hal-04791117

HAL Id: hal-04791117

<https://univ-lemans.hal.science/hal-04791117v1>

Submitted on 19 Nov 2024

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial - NoDerivatives 4.0 International License



2018-n°1

Heather Braun, Elisabeth Lamothe, Delphine Letort (dir.), *Les Cultures ado : consommation et production*

« Beyond the Barricade: Adolescents Rehearsing and Performing Masculinities in Music Theatre »

Robert Legg (Senior Lecturer at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)



Cette œuvre est mise à disposition selon les termes de la Licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale - Pas de Modification 4.0 International

Résumé

Cet article a recours à la théorie développée par Judith Butler sur la performance du genre et au concept élaboré par R. W. Connell sur l'hégémonie masculine pour présenter une recherche quasi ethnographique entreprise auprès d'adolescents: ces derniers, qui appartiennent à un groupe de théâtre musical britannique, répétaient de manière amateur *Les Misérables*, l'œuvre de Claude-Michel Schönberg couronnée par un succès international. L'analyse porte sur certains thèmes reflétant la manière dont les acteurs appréhendaient les rôles genrés qu'ils étaient amenés à jouer et à répéter, et leur manière d'interagir en fonction de ces derniers. À l'aide de notes et d'enregistrements effectués au cours de neuf mois d'observation, trois épisodes spécifiques impliquant de jeunes hommes ont été isolés pour analyser la façon dont la sous-culture des jeunes dans le domaine de la comédie musicale opère pour interdire l'expression de masculinités hégémoniques et la domination sociale, tout en donnant aux participants la possibilité d'explorer des questions esthétiques. Enfin, l'article montre que le contexte spécifique du théâtre musical amateur pour les jeunes offre un espace favorable à la performance de masculinités alternatives.

Mots-clés

comédie musicale, genre, masculinité, performance

Abstract

Drawing upon Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity and R. W. Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, this paper describes quasi-ethnographic research undertaken with adolescent members of a youth music theatre group in the United Kingdom as they rehearsed and performed in an amateur production of Claude-Michel Schönberg's internationally acclaimed musical *Les Misérables*. Analysis focuses on a number of themes emerging from the actors' understanding of and interactions with the gendered roles they were allocated to rehearse and perform. Three specific episodes involving young male performers, selected from nine months' worth of observation notes and recordings, serve as vehicles for the exploration of ways in which the youth music theatre subculture acts to proscribe hegemonic masculinities of social dominance while affording participants valuable opportunities to investigate aesthetic issues and concerns. Finally, the paper shows how the specific context of amateur youth music theatre provides a safe context for the rehearsal and performance of non-mainstream masculinities.

Keywords

genre, masculinity, musical, performance

The longstanding interest of music theatre scholars in issues of gender, and in masculine identities in particular, has yielded twin observations which when juxtaposed—as it seems they seldom are—present an apparent contradiction, or, at least, an interesting paradox. On the one hand, audiences and performers exposed to canonical works of music theatre, particularly but not exclusively those of the mid-twentieth century’s “golden era,” routinely encounter ideas of masculinity which can be read as limited, heteronormative and constricting.¹ Lead male characters such as those created by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, Jerome Kern, Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, and Irving Berlin tend to represent a view of an idealised “alpha” male—socially dominant, stoic, competitive, courageous, risk-taking and ultimately successful—which conforms in almost respect to R. W. Connell’s notion of hegemonic masculinity, a concept to which has long been ascribed significant agency in perpetuating unequal gender dynamics in the real world.²

On the other hand, music theatre has been claimed as a field in which participants identifying with minority, alternative or multiple expressions of masculinity find themselves welcome; in which the normative constructions of masculinity propagated in the canon of classic literature are in fact far from hegemonic.³ Just as the theatre in general has long been analysed as a potent liminal space for the exploration of otherness,⁴ music theatre is increasingly cast as an inherently rich site for transgression.⁵ Although this fact has been enthusiastically exploited in recent and commercially successful pieces—like Trey Parker, Robert Lopez and Matt Stone’s musical *The Book of Mormon*, Richard Thomas and Stewart Lee’s controversial *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, and *The Drowsy Chaperone* by Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison—these works remain conspicuous as welcome outliers from what must be regarded as a deeply conservative tradition. The paradox of masculinities in music theatre—that is, the unambiguous dissonance between the textual and the contextual—is the starting point for this research. Building on a theoretical foundation of gender performativity⁶—from which gender is seen as a socially mediated, potentially fluid and non-binary phenomenon characterised by “doing” rather than “being”—and on a body of work that has highlighted adolescence as a critical period in the development of gender identities,⁷ this paper considers the experience of a small group of young males and

¹ John Bush JONES, *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre*, Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2003, 20-22.

² R. W. CONNELL and James W. MESSERSCHMIDT, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender and Society* 19, n° 6 (2005), 829-59.

³ John M. CLUM, *Something for the Boys: Musical Theater and Gay Culture*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2001.

⁴ Victor TURNER, “Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbolology,” *Rice University Studies* 60, n° 3 (1974), 53-92; Stephen Bigger, “Victor Turner, Liminality and Cultural Performance,” *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 30, n° 2 (2009), 209-12.

⁵ Pamyla Alayne STIEHL, *The Dansical: American Musical Theatre Reconfigured as a Choreographer’s Expression and Domain*, doctoral diss., University of Colorado, 2008.

⁶ Judith BUTLER, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York: Routledge, 1990.

⁷ For example: Sanford M. DORNBUSCH, “The Sociology of Adolescence,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 15, n° 1 (1989), 233-59.

females participating in music theatre. Arising from a longer mixed-methods project which explored the lived experiences of adolescent singers,⁸ this quasi-ethnographic research reflects on participant-observations and interviews carried out in the United Kingdom over a period of nine months with members of a youth music theatre group preparing for an amateur production of the internationally celebrated through-sung musical *Les Misérables*.⁹

An interest in the nature of the participants' own gender performances and the relation of those performances to the perceived gender roles of the characters the participants portrayed, both in rehearsal and performance, led to key questions about the adolescents' interactions with and understandings of concepts of gender, firstly within the specific subculture of amateur youth music theatre, secondly in the context of a demonstrably conservative work with roots in the nineteenth century, and thirdly in the wider cultural landscape of twenty-first-century adolescence. Borrowing from Wolcott's classic observation strategies, these interests and concerns represented "the specific problem in question," in a methodology which also employed "broad sweep" observations of the cultural context, observations which took "nothing in particular" as their impetus, and observations which seized upon apparent "paradoxes."¹⁰ As the research period progressed, observation data—amounting in total to more than sixty hours of observation notes and a similar quantity of recorded interviews—focused increasingly on the three male students who volunteered themselves as case studies: Simon,¹¹ a white British boy from a family of education professionals, and Josh, a white British boy from a working class family, were both fifteen at the completion of the research; Sid, whose Sri Lankan parents owned and ran a local retail business, was fourteen and in the school year below the other two. The group leaders considered all three students to be engaged, successful and popular with their peers, characterising them at the beginning of the project as "compulsive volunteers." I was especially alert to interactions involving these three boys when recording exchanges and interactions. Conversations with Simon, Josh and Sid also represented slightly more than half of the unstructured interviews carried out before and after the observations, the remainder involved teachers and other students involved in the production. The research took place at a large community comprehensive school where the rehearsals were held, in a modern performing arts space well equipped for dance and drama. The 27-strong group of fourteen- to eighteen-year-olds was skewed towards girls, who represented three quarters of the cast. Three

⁸ Robert LEGG, *Delightful to Nature: A Mixed-Methods Exploration of Adolescent Singing Participation in the United Kingdom*, doctoral diss., University of Bristol, 2012.

⁹ Claude-Michel SCHÖNBERG, Alain BOUBLIL, Jean-Marc NATÉL and Herbert KRETZMER, *Les Misérables* (through-sung musical in two acts), New York: Music Sales, 1985. References hereafter to act and scene numbers correspond to those of the libretto (New York: Music Theatre International, 2011).

¹⁰ Harry F. WOLCOTT, "Confessions of a 'Trained' Observer," in Thomas S. Popkewitz and B. Robert Tabachnick (eds), *The Study of Schooling: Field Based Methodologies in Educational Research and Evaluation*, New York: Praeger, 1981, 247-63.

¹¹ All names are pseudonyms, chosen by the subjects themselves.

adults led the rehearsals, one of whom knew a number of the cast through her day job as a schoolteacher.

Reading a gendered text

Victor Hugo's novel, now widely read as a classic of the nineteenth century, received distinctly mixed reviews at its 1862 publication, with Baudelaire—"Ce livre est immonde et inepte"¹²—and Flaubert—"Je ne trouve dans ce livre ni vérité, ni grandeur. Quant au style, il me semble intentionnellement incorrect et bas"¹³—lining up to denigrate the paucity of its execution and the crudeness of its character drawing. More than a century later, the Royal Shakespeare Company's English-language production of Schönberg and Boublil's musical earned almost universally vitriolic notices, with Michael Ratcliffe's caustic review for the Observer—"Victor Hugo on the garbage dump ... a witless and synthetic entertainment"¹⁴—perhaps least enthusiastic of all.

The hostility shown by professional critics did nothing at all to dampen the overwhelmingly positive response of the theatre-going public. Michael Billington's belated and understated concession in *The Guardian* that "audiences love Les Mis"¹⁵ is an inadequate statement of the extent to which the musical has been successful in building a loyal and in some cases fanatical following. The immense popularity of *Les Misérables* has ensured the commercial viability of the original West End production over three decades, has made successes of many additional productions worldwide, and was both reflected in and sustained by a significant online fandom long before the release of Tom Cooper's film in 2012.¹⁶ The decision to release the show in a version authorised for amateur performance by school-aged performers in 2001 provided new possibilities for enthusiasts—"Miserablists"—to engage with the work in performance and was seized upon by schools and youth groups across the United Kingdom.¹⁷

Several of the adolescents interviewed for this study identified as fans of the work even before rehearsals properly began. Simon, later to be cast in the principal role of Marius

¹² This book is squalid and inept. Giovanni DOTOLI, "Baudelaire-Hugo: Une rencontre au bord de l'abîme," in David R. Ellison and Ralph Heyndels (eds.), *Les modernités de Victor Hugo*, Paris: Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2004, 155.

¹³ I find neither truth nor grandeur in this book. As for the style, it strikes me as intentionally improper and third rate. Gustave Flaubert to Madame Roger de Genettes, Croisset, July 1862. <<http://bit.ly/2cRtft/>>, accessed September 12, 2016.

¹⁴ Michael RATCLIFFE, "Victor Hugo on the Garbage Dump," *The Observer*, October 13, 1985.

¹⁵ Michael BILLINGTON, "Twenty-five years on, they ask me if I was wrong about Les Misérables ..." *The Guardian Online*. <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2010/sep/21/les-miserables-25-year-anniversary/>>, accessed 12 September, 2016.

¹⁶ At the time of this empirical research, Tom Hooper's film of *Les Misérables* has not been released, but was announced, and had been much anticipated among the online communities. Critical analysis of the film and its relationship with the stage show later developed as a significant theme within Les Mis fandom.

¹⁷ By October 2015 there had been 4,000 amateur productions of the Schools' Edition, making it "the most successful musical ever produced in schools". Dominic CAVENDISH, "30 reasons why Les Misérables has lasted 30 years," *The Telegraph*, October 8, 2015. <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/theatre/what-to-see/30-reasons-why-les-mis-has-lasted-30-years/>>, accessed 19 September, 2016,

Pontmercy, described the mixture of trepidation and excitement that he experienced upon hearing that the musical was to be his group's next large-scale project:

When I found out that we were doing *Les Mis*, I was, like, it was a double reaction ... I was so happy, 'cos this show was something that I'd dreamed about performing in all my life, really, and now here was my big chance. It was amazing. ... but I was also terrified because this was such a big, like, such a big deal and what if I didn't get a good part?

As rehearsals began, the actors became more familiar with the dramatic canvas of *Les Misérables*. Criticism of the musical has unsurprisingly centred on the extent to which the themes of a thousand-page novel are—or even can be—successfully communicated in three and a half hours of stage time. Jack Tinker's review for the *Daily Mail* invoked a memorable image in the service of this idea, writing that it was “like attempting to pour the entire Channel through a china teapot.”¹⁸ From the array of characters in Hugo's text, the musical focuses on a significantly smaller number, allowing three male and three female principals to drive the majority of the drama. Inspector Javert's obsessive and morally questionable pursuit of the fugitive protagonist Jean Valjean provides the central dramatic relationship of the piece, while Marius Pontmercy, a student revolutionary, operates as the romantic lead male, obliged to choose between love and political action. The abandoned grisette Fantine and her daughter Cosette provide a context in which Valjean's moral compass can be employed, while the streetwise Éponine forms a love triangle with Cosette and a largely oblivious Marius. A handful of small but important roles—the Bishop of Digne, Monsieur and Madame Thernadier, Enjolras—completes the cast of principals, with a group of yet more modest roles fulfilled by members of the chorus.

Discussion of these characters among the actors in the production inevitably focused at first on individuals' satisfaction—or disappointment—with the perceived size or dramatic potential of the roles into which they had been cast. Several actors showed considerable insight by identifying their allocated roles as serving key dramatic functions within the show. Fifteen-year-old Ella, cast as Fantine, summarised her character's functionality astutely when she said of her relationship with the audience, “I die, they cry. Move along, people: nothing more to see here. I'm just an everyday whore with a big heart and nice hair.” Josh and Sid, both cast as members of the chorus, grappled with not having named roles. Sid's commitment to the musical seemed to falter at first, but he came to view the opportunity to take part in the musical as “a total one-off” and “something that you just can't give up”.

Informal, unstructured conversations with and between cast members at this early stage resulted in a number of unsolicited comments about the gender roles represented by the principal characters. One way in which this theme emerged was through an ongoing commentary on the perceived dissonance between the gendered requirements of the male roles

¹⁸ Michale BILLINGTON, “Twenty-five years on”, *op. cit.*

and the actors' own performances of masculinity in everyday life, focusing particularly on the seventeen-year-old actor Cameron's ability to portray Jean Valjean as demanded by the script. In the runaway cart scene, in which Valjean displays unusual physical strength by lifting a broken cartwheel to release a trapped man, the improbability of Cameron being able to lift such a heavy object was the subject of friendly but persistent repartee which included reminders that the cart was made of cardboard and, in an allusion to the cartoon character Popeye, suggestions that Cameron might "bulk up" by eating more spinach.

Characteristic	Character(s)	Song(s)	Event(s) or Line(s)
Heterosexual	All males	Various	Relationships exclusively heterosexual
Physically strong	Valjean	Act 1, scene 3, "Cart Crash" Act 2, scene 4, "The Sewers"	Saves man's life with an act of superhuman strength Carries Marius from danger, saving his life
Sexual "consumer" of female body	Foreman Sailors	Act 1, scene 2, "At the End of the Day" Act 1, scene 3, "The Docks"	"Take a look at his trousers, you see where he stands" "Seven days at sea can make you hungry for a poke"
"Protector/possessor" of female	Valjean of Fantine Valjean of Cosette Marius of Cosette	Act 1, scene 3, "The Docks" Act 1, scene 5, "Fantine's Death" Act 2, scene 6, "Marius and Cosette"	Takes Fantine to hospital Assures dying Fantine that he will care for Cosette Agrees to protect Cosette from the truth about Valjean
Valued other than by appearance	All males	Various	No concrete evidence offered
Required to choose between love and action	Marius	Act 1, scene 8, "The ABC Café"	"Marius, you are no longer a child"
Capable of God-like acts of generosity	Bishop	Act 1, prologue	Makes the life-changing gift of precious silver
Intransigent, inflexible	Javert	Act 1, scene 7, "Stars" Act 2, scene 5, "Javert's Suicide"	Javert devotes his life to the capture of Valjean Kills himself, unable to accept he has been wrong

TABLE 1. Male participants' analysis of masculinities performed in *Les Misérables*

Pursuing this theme further in a semi-structured, activity-based interview, Simon, Josh and Sid showed their developed understanding of *Les Misérables* as a gendered text by suggesting how key moments in the musical could be read as assertions of key male traits. Physical strength, demonstrated in the runaway cart episode, was an uncontroversial first suggestion. From here, the respondents became more sophisticated in their analysis, suggesting that Victor Hugo and his posthumous collaborators had drawn men as both "sexual consumers" and "protectors" of the female body: the former exemplified by the lecherous foreman and sailors; the latter shown systematically in Valjean's relationship with Fantine and, later, Cosette. In their analysis, shown more completely in TABLE 1, the male characters of the musical emerged as capable of God-like acts of generosity—shown by the Bishop of Digne's gift of precious silverware to Valjean—but also as potentially intransigent and inflexible—as demonstrated throughout by the character of Inspector Javert. Simon saw the tension between love and political action experienced by his own character, Marius, as one of the few more subtle drawings of masculinity in the show:

Simon: "When you think, most of it's very, very, like, black and white. There's not a lot of room for... doubt where the *Les Mis* men are involved. Marius is the only one faced with choices about how he sees himself. He's the only one who gets to define himself."

RL: "Marius is given choices about his own ... development?"

Simon: "Well, yeah. In a way. Although, it's ... it's unclear about exactly how that ends. It's a bit of a set-up, in "Red and Black" but then it doesn't really go anywhere. But he definitely has a moment... of revelation."

On the other hand, Josh's interpretation of this scene in the ABC Café, in which Marius's enchantment with Cosette distracts both himself and the other students from discussing their revolutionary plans, placed emphasis not on an incremental demonstration of Marius's character development so much as on Marius as "totally self-obsessed and unconnected with the real world ... a spoiled little rich kid who doesn't have to worry about a single thing ... a trustafarian." This exchange typified the boys' discursive approach to *Les Misérables* and its principal characters: the thoughtful analysis they offered revealing a sophisticated understanding of the literary landscape. In general, the boys' reading of the text resonates with received interpretations of Connell's hegemonic masculinity¹⁹ in that they viewed masculinity and agency as intertwined, and male competitiveness as diegetically appropriate and normal,²⁰ and in that they largely resisted attributions of dependency on women.²¹ Moreover, their unambiguous running commentary on their own masculinities conformed both with Máirtín Mac an Ghaill's²² analysis of the mechanisms of the socialisation of sexuality as well as with the assertion by Frosh et al.²³ of young men as "active, interpretive and critical subjects, who continually reinvented their sexual and gendered identities as they interacted with peers and others."²⁴ That is to say, contrary to the terms of Connell's concept as it was originally drawn,²⁵ the boys' reception of the text was not simply to adopt its values as part of a pre-existing heteronormative, hegemonic discourse of male dominance. The lived experiences of the boys in this study saw them writing and rewriting their own masculinities, through interactions with others, in ways which resonated—sometimes sympathetically but at other times discordantly—with the narratives and values of the text. From innumerable possibilities the following three episodes, representing different phases of the rehearsal period, illustrate some of the ways in which this reflexive process of identity construction took place within the peer group.

¹⁹ R. W. CONNELL and James W. MESSERSCHMIDT, *op. cit.*

²⁰ Michael KIMMEL, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*, New York: Harper, 2008, 217.

²¹ Janet HOLLAND et al., *The Male in the Head: Young People, Heterosexuality and Power*, London: Tufnell, 1998, 160.

²² Máirtín MAC AN GHAILL, *The Making of Men: Masculinities, Sexualities and Schooling*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994, 91.

²³ Stephen FROSH, Ann PHOENIX and Rob PATTMAN, *Young Masculinities: Understanding Boys in Contemporary Society*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002, 50-2.

²⁴ Pam ALLRED and Nick J. FOX, "The Sexuality-assemblages of Young Men: A New Materialist Analysis," *Sexualities* 18, n° 8 (2015), 906.

²⁵ R. W. CONNELL, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1987.

October: Episode 1

A month into rehearsals, the cast had a series of sessions where for the first time the singers worked with a live piano accompaniment, which I played. The actors sat in a circle on the floor of the studio, standing to sing their lines but never moving far from the spot. The older, more confident singers were already well prepared vocally and were able to engage dramatically with their characters. The song being rehearsed was “One Day More” from the final scene of the first act, a number scored for nine solo singers and a chorus of revolutionary students. Initially unable to sing a particular line—“This never-ending road to Calvary”—clearly and in time, Cameron insisted on re-running his opening section several times over. After the musical director suggested tactfully that “Maybe we can look at this another time ... Let’s take a ten-minute break,” a conversation involving Ella, Sid and Josh provided an insight into a developing tension among the cast, which was expressed in gendered terms. As they saw it, Cameron’s role as the principal actor in the musical was influencing his real-life behaviour in rehearsals, and causing him to over-perform aspects of his masculinity in what they perceived as an inauthentic way:

Ella: “It’s totally Jean Valjean. [...] That’s where it’s coming from.”

Sid: “It’s like, we’re all sitting here *waiting* for him to. [...] we’ve got to wait for the Great One.”

Ella: “It’s not what he’s normally like. Normally he’s cuddly little Cameron but now Jean Valjean has taken over and we’ve all *created a monster*. We’re all supposed to think he’s, like, this hot “alpha male” guy. [...] And those little Year 8s and 9s, oh my God. They *do!*”

Josh: “And one of the reasons to even be in this show is that, in a way, you’re not expected, people don’t have crazy ideas about what you have to be like to be, you know, *manly*.”

After the break, Josh developed this theme more publicly and with evident sincerity:

Josh: “Can I just say that this is, like, a rehearsal for everyone. [...] We need to be thinking more about how we want to use the time. [...] I know we all want this to be really good and everything. [...] We shouldn’t forget who we really are.”

Both exchanges appeared rich in meaning. The suggestion that dominating behaviours inherent to the character could be transferred in rehearsal to an actor who would otherwise not exhibit such traits seemed like an expression of a Stanislavskian “method.”²⁶ Ella and Josh’s analysis suggested that, by adopting what they called “alpha male” tendencies, Cameron was both playing to a second audience—the younger members of the cast—and transgressing the subculture’s fundamental doxa²⁷ where multiple masculinities were concerned. The assertion of hegemonic masculinity in the music theatre context—however much the text might invite it—was unacceptable and inauthentic in the eyes of Josh. Later that day, I asked him about his motivation for speaking out in the rehearsal:

²⁶ Konstantin STANISLAVSKI, *An Actor Prepares*, London: Methuen, 1988.

²⁷ Used in the Bourdieusian sense. Pierre BOURDIEU, *La Distinction: Critique sociale du jugement*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1979, 549.

Josh: "I really think [...] attitude is incredibly important and one of the reasons we all come here—especially the boys, I think—is to get away from that whole competitive, 'I'm the best, and you'd better know it' attitude. We get so much of that stuff all the time. ... Like, some of us, at school, we have to fit in with all of that all day. ... This isn't the place for that attitude."

RL: "Why do you say 'especially' the boys?"

Josh: "'Cos ... boys have, well there are expectations. Being in a musical isn't what's expected. Playing rugby, yes. [...] Playing anything sport, actually. But not dancing, and singing and ... acting. [...] In [the music theatre group] you don't have to be a dickhead all the time. It's great that boys can break the mould here [...] but it means that attitude is really important. 'Cos people's self-respect is, like, easy to break, or whatever."

What had seemed to me—and to the musical director, I discovered afterwards—like an isolated example of only slightly self-absorbed behaviour on Cameron's part, had been read by others, and by Josh in particular, as part of a wider pattern in which the attitude of "inclusive masculinity"²⁸ demanded by the context risked being compromised. Josh identified the need to "pass" within the prevailing culture of his school by performing a masculinity that he called "being a dickhead," and established the risk, as well as the opportunity, inherent to the performance of alternative masculinities even within the inclusive landscape of the amateur youth music theatre subculture. The value he and others placed on the subculture's acceptance of multiple masculinities made it worth speaking out in the context of the group. I asked him about the connection that Ella made earlier in the day between the masculinities of the musical itself and those rehearsed and performed by the male actors:

Josh: "You've gotta remember that it's a just story. And just because he's, maybe, the main part of the story doesn't make what he's doing the ultimate answer... That's what I reckon, anyway."

It was unclear whether Josh was critiquing Valjean the character, Cameron the actor, or Cameron's rendering of Valjean, but his denial of a particular behaviour as an acceptable "answer" in the given situation resonated with his earlier comments about the central importance of "attitude" and the fact that certain inclusive attitudes to male behaviours were part of "why we all come here." The value of this safe space, in the context of an everyday existence declared hostile to some boys' masculinities, had been firmly asserted.

April: Episode 2

The actors' negotiation of their changing vocalities was another domain in which gendered ideas proliferated. Some of the male singers' voices were at an awkward *cambiata* stage, where making a focused and powerful sound was difficult, while for others the developing adult voice was already emerging. It was evident that for many male members of the cast,

²⁸ Eric ANDERSON, "Orthodox and Inclusive Masculinities: Competing Masculinities Among Heterosexual Men in a Feminized Terrain," *Sociological Perspectives* 48, n° 3 (2005), 337-55.

exploration of a developing new vocal range was tied up with an emerging adolescent identity. For some of the younger singers, this was—in the vocal sense, at least—aspirational: the musical director frequently discovered that protestations that the music was “too high” when sung in the higher octave were unfounded, whereas at the lower octave the boys seemed to produce little or no sound on certain pitches. Martin Ashley’s study of teenage boy singers suggests that whereas access to high vocal registers is celebrated among professional adult singers—he cites Robbie Williams and Mika as indicative examples of successful musicians singing across a wide vocal range—it is seen as undesirable among younger teens in the process of establishing a new vocal identity. As one of his informants puts it, “We don’t want to be cute.”²⁹

The image shows a musical score for 'The Café Song' from Les Misérables, act 2, measures 51-54. The score is written for voice and piano. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staves. The tempo markings are 'rall.' and 'a tempo'. The lyrics are 'Oh my friends, my friends don't ask me What your sac-ri-fice was for...'. The piano accompaniment includes dynamics like 'mf' and 'f'. The score is numbered 51, 52, 53, and 54.

EXAMPLE 1. *Les Misérables*, act 2, “The Café Song,” bb. 51-54

With the rehearsal period nearly exhausted, I was spending a lot of time coaching individuals at the piano. The through-sung nature of the musical meant that transpositions were often impracticable, so part of my job was to help actors negotiate vocal lines that they felt were uncomfortably pitched in their vocal registers. Simon and I were working on a passage from “The Café Song” (EXAMPLE 1) which included an F₄ held as a dramatic pause. Using his mobile phone, Simon had recorded the song and was listening to it through the phone’s speaker:

²⁹ Martin ASHLEY, *How High Should Boys Sing?*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, 134-6.

RL: “That’s great. [...] [Simon makes a face.] But you didn’t like it?”

Simon: “It’s not what I want. I don’t want [...] to shout that little bit, but it’s hard to hold that note.”

RL: “Well, I think you’re getting the note.”

Simon: “I want the line to be beautiful. When I listen back it sounds ugly. Marius ... everything about him needs to be [...] effortless [...] and beautiful. That’s what I aim for [when I play him]. I imagine he’s the kind of person who always looks and sounds good.”

RL: “So, how do you do that?”

Simon: “I have to [...] work hard. Like, it’s a chance to look good and put effort into my appearance, too. Marius has [...] like, really good skin and everything. [...] *In normal life* I wouldn’t be able to, you know [...] it wouldn’t be good to be thinking about my appearance so much.”

RL: “Why not?”

Simon: “I [...] it wouldn’t be [...] cool.”

RL: “How about Marius? Did he, erm, use hair product?”

Simon: “Oh no [laughing], he was a natural!”

Apparently unlike Ashley’s participants, Simon was not concerned only with the production of a full-voiced sound in the speech register, and had automatically used his strong falsetto register for the brief G₄ and A-flat₄ notes—on “Became their last communion”—that occurred earlier in the song. We agreed that a falsetto production was unsuitable for the dramatic moment being rehearsed, however, and so Simon had persevered in full voice. His description of his intentions in performing the role of Marius once again identified the music theatre context as a “safe space” for the rehearsal of non-mainstream masculinities. By juxtaposing what he calls “normal life,” where aesthetic concerns were apparently off-limits for an adolescent male, with the specific context of the musical, where creating something of beauty was a primary concern, Simon demonstrated how the subculture provided an environment in which participants could legitimately resist hegemonic masculinity while preserving what he saw as a more mainstream performance of masculinity in the everyday culture of school.

Concern for the aesthetic as conceived by Simon clearly encompassed both the world of sound—“I want that line to be beautiful”—but also a visual, body-focused domain—“Marius has ... really good skin and everything.” Moreover, by moving from one idea to the next, Simon demonstrated a clear association between these two ideas of the beautiful. Meanwhile, his claim that Marius’s achievement of beauty was “effortless” and that he was “a natural” served to highlight Simon’s understanding of the fictional character as an ultimately unachievable ideal form. It was unclear whether Simon’s reading of Marius as a “beautiful” person was shared by others in the cast, but other actors clearly did view their own characters as vehicles for exploring an otherwise-inadmissible aesthetic dimension. About week later, on the night of the first performance, an exchange between Sid and Josh, both barefoot and dressed in rags for the opening “Chain gang” part of the prologue, discussed the same idea:

Sid: [Adjusting his hair] "It's got to be just right!"
Josh: "It's ironic how much preparation goes into making us look like dirty prisoners."
Sid: "Yeah, well, I don't want to be a dirty prisoner with bad hair, do I?"
Josh: "It's all just an excuse to try out new looks for you, isn't it?"
Sid: [Laughing] "Pretty much. How else am I going to get my hands on this much make-up?"

I asked both boys what they thought about their costumes:

Josh: "The rags aren't my best costume, although you can rip them a little bit extra if you're confident about your body."

Sid: "Which Josh is."

Josh: "Yeah. [...] Which I *am*, so. [...] y'know, show a bit of torso. [...] We're supposed to smear make-up on the bits of skin you can see, to be dirt, but I just do a little bit [...] 'cos I think it looks a bit [...] tacky. We test it out from a distance and tell each other if it's [...] too much, not enough, whatever. [...] At school this would get called so gay it would be, like, well, yeah, not cool..."

One interesting feature of this conversation was the boys' frank acknowledgement of the ways in which the subcultural context served to legitimate behaviours that in the wider social setting were not part of an "acceptable" mainstream adolescent male experience. In particular, the possibility for bodily display, and for the explicit discussion of a bodily aesthetic, were identified as valuable in the context of a wider culture which presumed³⁰ or even demanded heterosexuality and which proscribed males' attentiveness to their personal appearance with the "so gay" epithet.

Away from this threat of censure, the boys appeared to be customising their costumes and make-up in ways that provided opportunities to maximise their perceived attractiveness to a real audience, sometimes at the expense of the fidelity of their on-stage appearance to the imagined characters that they played, attractive or otherwise. In choosing a "beautiful" means of vocal production, in ripping a costume to expose more torso, and in applying just the right amount of artificial grime to the skin, the boys were evidently taking aesthetic decisions: in their own ways, Simon, Sid and Josh all articulated aspects of their concern for a personal aesthetic—vocal or visual—and related their intentions at times towards their reading of the text and at times distinctly against it. What was striking, throughout this process, was the extent of the self-awareness they displayed and the willingness for open reflection they showed.

May: Episode 3

The music theatre group's production of *Les Misérables* opened in May for a run of five performances. Before each show, the group met in costume to receive notes from tutors and to perform a vocal warm-up around the piano. Each night, the director enforced a period of quiet, seated conversation between the warm-up and the beginning of the performance. The actors used this time to go over their lines, remind themselves about key props, and both to analyse

³⁰ Máirtín MAC AN GHAILL, *op. cit.*

moments in previous rehearsals and to anticipate the performance ahead of them. One recurring theme was the discussion of who might and might not be in the audience. Anxiety surrounding the notion of particular individuals choosing to attend the show was, it was quickly pointed out, at odds with the underlying principle of a public performance:

Ella: "Y'know, it's not sold out tonight, so, *anyone* theoretically can just walk in."
Krystal: "That's the *idea!* People are supposed to buy tickets. That's what we *want.*"

The idea of unexpected individuals joining the audience soon led to the imagining of personal doomsday scenarios involving the appearance of particularly unwelcome people:

Ella: "Who's the worst, um... if you look out into the front row tonight, who's the person you'd most hate to see there on the front row?"

Sid: "If I saw [a school classmate] out there, I would *walk*. I wouldn't look back, man."

Josh: "You wouldn't walk!"

Sid: "I would. I'd be outta there. If [he] saw this show, my life would not be worth living."

Krystal: "You couldn't let us all down."

Ella: "You couldn't let us down, Sid. What would be so bad about [that person] seeing the show?"

Sid: "It would be bad."

Ella: "Why?"

Sid: "You don't know what it's like at [my school]. [...] I'd just have to kill myself or something. Okay, I wouldn't walk but I'd have to commit suicide on stage."

Cameron: "I absolutely don't care who's out there."

Sid: "Yeah, but you're Valjean, aren't you? [...] Totally different..."

Cameron: "How is that different? [...] I don't get how it's different."

Previous episodes had shown the music theatre subculture to be one in which behaviours normally impermissible for adolescent males were legitimated. This conversation tested the boundaries of the subculture and showed them to be shaky at their outer limits. Music theatre performance is arguably a public act by definition. Earlier exchanges in which the boys had engaged positively with the idea of an audience's appreciation showed that they had not always conceived of the production as entirely private. But the concept that individuals from another part of their social experience would appear in this domain was clearly challenging, perhaps especially when the actors encountered those individuals primarily in a context with very different doxa concerning the performance of gender. Factors playing into this anxiety seemed to include both the nature of the character being performed—"you're Valjean ... Totally different"—and the nature of the "mainstream" culture within which the actor routinely operates—"You don't know what it's like at [my school]." It might be conjectured too that Sid's comment implied that Ella, a girl, could not understand the peer pressures brought to bear in an all-boys secondary school environment. Disappointingly, but perhaps unsurprisingly given previous research into the ways in which teachers and other adults police gender binaries,³¹ certain male teachers were also named by Josh and Sid as among those they would least like to see in the front row of the audience. We can only speculate about their reasons for hoping that

³¹ Jonathan SALISBURY and David JACKSON, *Challenging Macho Values: Practical Ways of Working with Adolescent Boys*, London: Falmer, 1996, 24.

these adults were not present.

Discussion and conclusion

The status of music theatre in education has received relatively modest attention in the literature,³² with the majority of academic scholarship focused on surveys³³ or works³⁴ in a professional performance context, and the majority of educational texts concerned more-or-less directly with fairly narrow pedagogical matters. While the wealth of literature concerning adolescent gender construction offers almost unlimited possibilities for the analysis of data from the present study, there is, perhaps unsurprisingly, no specific precedent for discussing these issues theoretically or practically as they pertain to the subculture of amateur youth music theatre. Furthermore, claims based on the evidence of this project come with the usual caveats about the small scale nature of the research, the more-than-theoretical possibility of seemingly unsolicited statements by the respondents being the result of an observer effect, and the difficulties and undesirability of generalising from contextual, qualitative research in an interpretive paradigm. Notwithstanding these limitations, some discussion about the provisional findings of this study may legitimately be entertained.

In her analysis of boys' involvement in dance education Nadine Holdsworth has rightly asserted that "There is ... now a widespread recognition that gender is constantly worked towards, in process, rehearsed and performed on a daily basis."³⁵ By drawing upon Anoop Nayak and Mary Jane Kehily's deployment of a metaphor from her own discipline—in which the "configuration of gender practice" is described as a "choreography, a set of culturally patterned activities"³⁶—Holdsworth reminds us that this "choreography" can be both resisted and remade, and that gender is consequently "unfixed and subject to shifting attitudes that constantly demand that behaviours are rethought ... for new times."³⁷ While the present research project did little if anything to disrupt these assertions, the context in which a variety of gendered ideas were played out—the specific cultural landscape in which the participants rehearsed and performed gender roles, and the specific musical text within which they rehearsed and performed their allocated dramatic roles—provides an opportunity to make some further observations particular to the amateur youth music theatre domain.

³² For a discussion of the pedagogical potential of music theatre education in the general curriculum see Robert LEGG and Alex GREEN, "Music theatre: at the crest of music education's third wave," *Music Education Research* 26, n° 4 (2015).

³³ For example, John KENRICK, *Music Theatre: A History*, New York: Bloomsbury, 2008.

³⁴ For example, Dominic MCHUGH, *Loverly: The Life and Times of My Fair Lady*, Oxford: OUP, 2012.

³⁵ Nadine HOLDSWORTH, "Boys Don't Do Dance, Do They?", *RIDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 18, n° 2 (2013), 169.

³⁶ Anoop NAYAK and Mary Jane KEHILY, *Gender, Youth and Culture: Global Masculinities and Femininities*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, 177.

³⁷ Nadine HOLDSWORTH, *op. cit.*, 169.

The first particularity concerns the importance of the text itself. Within the domain explored in my project, the musical work being performed assumed significance in discussions of gender that had not been predicted on the basis of earlier research. Participants' engagement with, anticipation of, and enthusiasm for *Les Misérables* was immediately striking, and, as we have seen, their analysis of the characters, the characters' gender roles, and the ways in which they served identifiable "functions" in the drama were dominant themes in discussions throughout the nine-month rehearsal and performance period. Weaknesses or ambiguities in the drawing of gendered characters, as Ella and Simon's responses show, were subject to sophisticated analysis on the part of these actors, who were also drawn to make comparisons between the gender performances of their peers and the gender stereotypes that they believed the characters were designed to represent. This process was generative as much as it was reflective. As Corbett has suggested, "imagination is not simply a confrontation with reality but a means of altering it; ... imagination is actually an instrument for the elaboration of reality; ... freedom is dependent on social conditions that can be refashioned by acts of imagination and will."³⁸ The music theatre actors' gendered interactions within the fictive context of the musical *Les Misérables* enabled sophisticated, flexible and imaginative understandings of gender to be co-constructed. As we have already seen, the catalytic function of this particular text in respect of these understandings seems to result to some extent from the dissonance between the visions of gender that it propagates and those espoused, rehearsed and performed by the actors. It presented, in short, a rich context for the exploration of adolescent gender.

A second particularity concerns the actors' explicit demarcation of the youth music theatre context as a "safe space" for alternative gender performances, and in particular for the performance of non-hegemonic masculinities. That Josh felt able to insist publicly on the prohibition of the performance of hegemonic masculinities of social dominance suggests a field in which powerful doxa operate against mainstream, normative ideas of gender. "Getting away from" normative gender attitudes was posited as a compelling reason for membership of the youth music theatre subculture, while comments like "We shouldn't forget who we really are" served to build an idea of what it means to perform gender authentically within this cultural domain. The respondents' characterisation of a specific culture in which authentic gender performances are not only permissible but also actively championed contrasts starkly with what was suggested as a potentially "unsafe"³⁹ scholastic environment in which normative gender performances are socially policed and where "we have to fit in with all of that all day." The need for constant watchfulness and adherence to strictly policed gender norms recalls Salisbury and Jackson's commentary on an experience they observed in an inner-city comprehensive school in

³⁸ Ken CORBETT, *Boyhoods: Rethinking Masculinities*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009, 139-40.

³⁹ Lynn C. HOLLEY and Sue STEINER, "Safe Space: Student Perspectives on Classroom Environment," *Journal of Social Work Education* 41, n° 1 (2005).

the East Midlands of the United Kingdom:

On another occasion, some [eleven- and twelve-year-old] boys were waiting to go into the hall for a dance lesson. They were showing themselves keen and eager to get in and start. [The head of the lower school] passed them and commented on their enthusiasm by giving a limp wrist, “camp” gesture. In view of the prevalent homophobic atmosphere around the school, what should boys be thinking about themselves in relation to dance in the eyes of the head of lower school? What a clear message is contained in this signal to boys since, according to the behaviour of the head of lower school, dance has no place in boys’ lives if they are considered to be real boys.⁴⁰

Indeed, the real value of a context in which participants could avoid the psychological and emotional harm of having to “pass” was something that resonated clearly throughout the research. As the third episode demonstrates, however, the subculture was viewed as permeable at its outer limits, and where this permeability was evident, adolescent male participants’ vulnerability to feelings of exposure, as well as to the perceived material consequences of exposure, was clear. The implications of these observations in terms of the need to provide psychologically healthy and emotionally supportive environments for young males, and females, evidently reach far wider than the scope of this project.

The third specific affordance of the context relates to the opportunity for male adolescents to engage critically with aesthetic questions, to pursue aesthetic ideals explicitly, and to recognise the male body as the object of others’ aesthetic enjoyment. To some extent, my respondents conformed to what Michael Gard has described as males “invested in the aesthetic of the self,” who find space to operate with freedom in the “high-brow and middle class worlds”⁴¹ of the arts. Certainly my observations lend weight to the idea of youth music theatre as a context that potentially legitimates a range of activities and concerns that are routinely proscribed from the mainstream adolescent male experience. One interesting aspect of the narratives that unfolded in this project was the way in which aesthetic concerns were justified both *by* and *against* the text of the musical play. Simon characterised his desire to produce a certain vocality as an attempt *to represent* Marius’s beauty while Josh expressed his wish to look good on stage and “show a bit of torso” *in spite of* the unappealing character he was playing: thus the boys’ employment of the text in explanation of their aesthetic choices was not straightforward.

The findings of this study also have implications for our understanding of wider gender theory. R. W. Connell’s original and seminal work on hegemonic masculinity posited a construct with significant agency in the perpetuation of unequal gender dynamics. Subsequent criticism of her work found her typologies too rigid and her suggestion of a cycle of reproduction too

⁴⁰ Jonathan SALISBURY and David JACKSON, *op. cit.*, 24.

⁴¹ Michael GARD, *Men who Dance: Aesthetics, Athletics and the Art of Masculinity* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 202.

fatalistic.⁴² The boys in *Les Misérables* evidently understood their experiences in opposition to a recognisable hegemonic or “orthodox” version of masculinity, lending credibility to Connell’s original typology, but like the American students interviewed by Eric Anderson they tend towards viewing “orthodox masculinity as undesirable and do not aspire to many of its tenets;”⁴³ instead identifying with an “inclusive” masculinity which was permissible in the context of the youth music theatre subculture. To the extent that the resistance they mounted was successful in affording them alternative and inclusive identities as popular and socially engaged young males, then, the cycle of reproduction that some associate with Connell’s construct of hegemonic masculinity was a phenomenon that could, in fact, be arrested. It is abundantly clear that, for the boys in this study, the “safe space” provided by their youth music theatre group was crucially important in providing opportunities for the rehearsal, performance and legitimation of a more diverse and inclusive range of masculine identities.

⁴² Demetrakis Z. DEMETRIOU, “Connell’s Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique,” *Theory and Society* 30, n° 3 (2001), 337-361; Margaret Wetherell and Nigel Edley, “Negotiating Hegemonic Masculinity: Imaginary Positions and Psycho-discursive Practices,” *Feminism and Psychology* 9, n° 3 (1999), 335-56.

⁴³ Eric ANDERSON, *op. cit.*, 338.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ALLRED Pam and J. FOX Nick, "The Sexuality-assemblages of Young Men: A New Materialist Analysis", *Sexualities* 18, no. 8 (2015), 362-77.
- ANDERSON Eric, "Orthodox and Inclusive Masculinities: Competing Masculinities Among Heterosexual Men in a Feminized Terrain", *Sociological Perspectives* 48, no. 3 (2005), 337-55.
- ASHLEY Martin, *How High Should Boys Sing?*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009.
- BIGGER Stephen, "Victor Turner, Liminality and Cultural Performance", *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 30, n° 2 (2009), 209-12.
- BOURDIEU Pierre, *La Distinction: Critique sociale du jugement*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1979.
- BUTLER Judith, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York: Routledge, 1990.
- CLUM John M., *Something for the Boys: Musical Theater and Gay Culture*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001.
- CONNELL R. W., *Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1987.
- CONNELL R. W., and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept", *Gender and Society* 19, no 6 (2005), 829-59.
- CORBETT Ken, *Boyhoods: Rethinking Masculinities*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- DEMETRIOU Demetrakis Z., "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique", *Theory and Society* 30, n° 3 (2001), 337-361.
- DORNBUSCH Sanford M., "The Sociology of Adolescence", *Annual Review of Sociology* 15, n° 1 (1989), 233-59.
- DOTOLI Giovanni, "Baudelaire-Hugo: Une rencontre au bord de l'abîme", in David R. Ellison and Ralph Heyndels (eds), *Les Modernités de Victor Hugo*, Paris: Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2004, 139-64
- FROSH Stephen, PHOENIX Ann and PATTMAN Rob, *Young Masculinities: Understanding Boys in Contemporary Society*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002.
- HOLDSWORTH Nadine, "Boys Don't Do Dance, Do They?" *RIDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 18, n° 2 (2013), 168-78.
- HOLLAND Janet, Caroline Ramazanoglu, Sue Sharpe and Rachel Thomson, *The Male in the Head: Young People, Heterosexuality and Power*, London: Tufnell, 1998.
- HOLLEY Lynn C. and STEINER Sue, "Safe Space: Student Perspectives on Classroom Environment", *Journal of Social Work Education* 41, n° 1 (2005), 49-64.
- JONES John Bush, *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre*, Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2003.
- KENRICK John, *Music Theatre: A History*, New York: Bloomsbury, 2008.
- KIMMEL Michael, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*, New York: Harper, 2008.
- GARD Michael, *Men who Dance: Aesthetics, Athletics and the Art of Masculinity*, New York: Peter Lang, 2006.
- LEGG Robert, *Delightful to Nature: A Mixed-methods Exploration of Adolescent Singing Participation in the United Kingdom*, Doctoral diss., University of Bristol, 2012.
- LEGG Robert and GREEN Alex, "Music Theatre: at the Crest of Music Education's Third Wave", *Music Education Research* 26, n° 4 (2015), 518-33.
- MAC AN GHAILL Máirtín, *The Making of Men: Masculinities, Sexualities and Schooling*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994.
- McHUGH Dominic, *Loverly: The Life and Times of My Fair Lady*, Oxford: OUP, 2012.
- NAYAK Anoop, and KEHILY Mary Jane, *Gender, Youth and Culture: Global Masculinities and Femininities*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008.
- SALISBURY Jonathan and JACKSON David, *Challenging Macho Values: Practical Ways of Working with Adolescent Boys*, London: Falmer, 1996.
- SCHÖNBERG Claude-Michel, BOUBLIL Alain, NATEL Jean-Marc and KRETZMER Herbert, *Les Misérables, Through-Sung Musical in Two Acts*, New York: Music Sales, 1985.

STANISLAVSKI Konstantin, *An Actor Prepares*, London: Methuen, 1988.

STIEHL Pamyla Alayne, *The Dansical: American Musical Theatre Reconfigured as a Choreographer's Expression and Domain*, Doctoral diss., University of Colorado, 2008.

TURNER Victor, "Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbolology", *Rice University Studies* 60, n° 3 (1974), 53-92.

WETHERELL Margaret and NIGEL Edley, "Negotiating Hegemonic Masculinity: Imaginary Positions and Psycho-discursive Practices", *Feminism and Psychology* 9, no. 3 (1999), 335-56.

WOLCOTT Harry F., "Confessions of a 'Trained' Observer", in Thomas S. Popkewitz and B. Robert Tabachnick (eds), *The Study of Schooling: Field Based Methodologies in Educational Research and Evaluation*, New York: Praeger, 1981, 247-63.