

'NEW MUSIC' AS PATRIARCHAL CATEGORY

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ABSTRACT

The term 'material' is highly conceptualized and important within New Music discourse. In many respects it could be seen as central. However, far from being a neutral term, 'material' and thus its position in (linguistic and musical) discourse is gendered as male. This, then, has consequences not just for the inclusion of, but the judgement between, women who wish to enter into the musical discourse and workplace as composers. This leads to the construction of gendered difference between female composers, and a process of immerization of those women who do meet the terms of the discourse. By a comparison of the music, and reception, of composers Rebecca Saunders and Jennifer Walshe I will explain how the musical discourse of material can be described as a practice of social closure which takes place under the auspicious label of musical quality, thereby highlighting that terms such as 'material' and 'composer' are used as barriers to exclude women from contemporary music practice. I will conclude by explaining how the male discourse of material functions to preserve the 'New Music' norm and retain the character of 'New Music' as historical and patriarchal category.

KEY WORDS: Rebecca Saunders, Jennifer Walshe, feminism, materialism, discourse, New Music.

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The term 'material' is highly conceptualized and important within new music discourse. Perhaps one reason for this is the discussion of 'material' in Adorno's work, and the continuing importance and influence of Adorno's writing on contemporary musical culture. Adorno defines 'material' early in his *Philosophy of Modern Music*, writing,

material is traditionally defined—in terms of physics, or possibly in terms of the psychology of sound—as the sum of all sounds at the disposal of the composer. The actual compositional material, however, is different from this sum as is language from its total supply of sounds. It is not simply a matter of the increase and decrease of this supply in the course of history. All its specific characteristics are indications of the historical process.¹

By this statement Adorno defines 'material' as an exclusive category, and one which is rooted in the history of music, stating further that, 'the meaning of musical material is not absorbed into the genesis of music, and yet this meaning cannot be separated from it.'² Finally, Adorno goes on to claim that the creative (compositional) act is itself the 'demands made on the

¹ Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. A. G. Mitchell and W. V. Blomster (London: Continuum, 2002), 32.

² *ibid.*

subject' by the material itself (and not, for example, by the composer's assessment of the material): 'an element socially determined by the consciousness of man'.³ Max Paddison assesses this by stating that Adorno's materialist aesthetics, 'makes the claim that judgements concerning the quality of a work, as consistency and progress (and ultimately as authenticity and 'truth' to the material) can (and indeed must) be grounded in the technical structure of the work.'⁴

Thus, in Adorno's conception, composition, material and subjectivity are inseparable. These three interlinked concepts can also be found in a more popular or lay definition of material. When the word 'material' is used by composers and critics it is popularly taken to mean 'that which the composer works with', and, frequently, the use of the term 'material' indicates what might be described as conventional musical aspects such as rhythm, pitch, and harmony.⁵ But the neutrality of this term is not indisputable. As any other term, it is subject to the social, political and ethical dimensions of language, cultural context and thought. That these discursive dimensions of music exist and are important is not an original insight. Jean-Jacques Nattiez's semiology of music considers these in some detail,⁶ and many semiotic and poststructuralist investigations of music have since emphasized meanings that are conceived extra to compositional, material, and subjective issues. Indeed, Kofi Agawu writes that when these are considered it can be possible to view analysis, 'as a mode of performance, or a mode of composing, not as an unveiling of resident truths.'⁷ Even further, feminist assessments of music have used consideration of the discursive and social elements of music to unveil symbolic violence within the conception of music and its materials. Susan McClary is one such author, and writes,

the structures graphed by the theorists, and the beauty celebrated by aestheticians are often stained with such things as violence, misogyny and racism. And perhaps

³ *ibid.*, p33.

⁴ Max Paddison, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 89.

⁵ Techniques for these are the focus of many composition programmes, and unsurprisingly there are many examples to support such teaching from the 20th century. This, although not a negative thing in itself, might be a reason for the beginnings of a conception that those aspects are the most prominent parts of musical material (and since the majority of 'canonic' examples of composers from the early 20th century are men, the beginnings of a conception that material is a male preserve).

⁶ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Towards a Semiology of Music*, trans. Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990).

⁷ Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 4.

more disturbing still, to those who would present music as autonymous and invulnerable [these] also frequently betray fear—fear of women, fear of the body.⁸

In such a context it is unsurprising that some composers might seek alternative ‘materials’ than those sanctioned by an historical narrative. And yet, the ‘New Music’ discourse itself is reluctant to accept these into a definition of material. I intend to argue that, rather than as a neutral term, ‘material’ can be seen as an exclusive term within discourse about contemporary music—and specifically ‘New Music’—and that this exclusivity is driven by an attempt to maintain institutional power. In order to investigate this, I employ a feminist poststructuralist critical discourse analysis (FPCDA) methodology, and so as to achieve this with respect to music as well as the discussion of music, I accept the wide definition of discourse given by Foucault when he writes that discourse can be described: ‘sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements.’⁹ Thus, I account for musical statements and the ‘regulated practice’ of contemporary music institutions as well as written and spoken statements in order to show that the system of the delineation and hierarchy of material serves to highlight which musical aspects are the thing(s) to be analysed, valued, or considered when music is approached by critics, institutions, and students. This therefore narrows ‘what the composer works with’ (as a taken definition of material) to a small group of considerations which have their origins within a particular conception of music history alone. More broadly, I will argue that this also limits the kinds of artists who can be described as composers since ‘what the composer works with’ indicates that composers are people who work with these elements. Therefore this discourse of material is central in delineating who composers are and what they can or may do.

Throughout the discussion I will use the English term ‘New Music’ to refer to what is most frequently described in German as *Neue Musik*. That is: a specifically European musical modernist tradition, believed to have originated from Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School, which now incorporates composers from North America, Australia, and Asia who identify with this approach to music. Carl Dahlhaus in his essay, ‘New Music as Historical Category’, begins by writing that, ‘[t]he concept of ‘New Music’, [...] serves to pinpoint the

⁸ Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 4.

⁹ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, (1969) 1972), 90.

difference between certain twentieth-century works and the mass of the remainder,¹⁰ but goes on to acknowledge that the term is unhelpfully vague and defined individually by those who use it. He further writes that, '[t]he concept of the 'new' [...] is, taken as a historical category, as unavoidable as it is precarious.'¹¹ What follows is a description of the relationship of the western classical music tradition with newness from around 1400 to around 1950, which defines newness and material or compositional attitudes as intrinsically linked. In this way, Dahlhaus notes that, 'what is seemingly most transient—the quality of incipient beginning, of 'for the first time'—acquires a paradoxical permanence.'¹² So, for Dahlhaus, the concept of material is a grounding or integral concept for the New Music scene and its institutions, linked to both newness/innovation and tradition, and even from his short definition it is possible to see how New Music is also a social and ideological structure.

Within this structure, as well as the musical elements mentioned earlier, the term 'material' is also used to refer to complexity and the prioritising of certain cerebral concepts. When teamed with the pitch, rhythm and harmony conditions given at the outset of the discussion this implies that only certain types of complexity, process, and thinking are valued within a New Music conception of material. Specifically, this does not include the tactile or visual elements of works, or structural complexity that does not arise from within notation. Importantly, it describes material in words that are familiarly gendered as male.

One way in which material, composition and ideology meet is in the idea of transcendence. On this Marcia J. Citron writes, '[a] central component of the metaphysical concerns the transcendence of the composer as subject. This situates attention on the ego, on a very strong, sometimes exaggerated notion of the self.'¹³ In fact, she finds this narrative in the history of western music which both pre-dates and pre-supposes modernism, writing, 'the sonata aesthetic stands as a symbol and product of western patriarchal values [...]. The conventions and subtext of the sonata aesthetic have privileged the masculine and held lesser meaning for women.'¹⁴ Citron goes on to explain the link between western music history, figures such as

¹⁰ Carl Dahlhaus, 'New Music as Historical Category', in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. by Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1964) 1988), 1-13; 1.

¹¹ Dahlhaus (1988), p2.

¹² Dahlhaus (1988), p13.

¹³ Marcia J. Citron, 'Feminist Approaches to Musicology,' in *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*, eds. Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 15-34; 23.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, 18.

Beethoven and the cult of genius and how this has no link to the figure of the composer as craftsman as found in women's discourse, therefore concluding that western musical development both within musical forms and as a historical narrative is a male psychological profile.¹⁵

Catherine Parsons Smith describes three patriarchal traditions at the beginning of the 20th century: serialism, neoclassicism, and futurism. She claims that all of these exclude women linguistically.¹⁶ In fact, they all link to the 'New Music' tradition in some way. Their convergence can be described broadly as 'Musical Modernism', which is also the best name I can give to the ideology of the new music scene in northern Europe and specifically Germany, as a set of ideas which owe their development to, and thus belong to, the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. As an obvious result of its historical nature, it might be said that women are not valued particularly highly within this construct. Parsons Smith later writes that, 'Modernism in music, as in literature, may be understood as a reaction to the first wave of feminism.'¹⁷

Although materialism itself might be a cause of indirect subordination of women, this attitude is probably best reflected in Aaron Copland's statements about Nadia Boulanger. Copland writes: 'in so far as she composed at all she must of necessity be listed in that unenviable category of the woman composer.'¹⁸ Despite popular recognition of Boulanger as a formative influence in Copland's compositional career, Copland prefers to focus on Boulanger's achievements as a teacher, although he does later speculate: 'Is it possible that there is a mysterious element in the nature of creativity that runs counter to the nature of the feminine mind? And yet there are more women composers than ever writing today. Writing, moreover, music worth playing.'¹⁹ Copland, as Adorno, identifies an interaction of material and subjectivity which meet in the compositional act, but furthermore states that female subjectivity may not be able to enter into this relationship at all.

¹⁵ Anna Piotrowska makes similar claims about the cult of genius and the modernist understanding of the figure of the composer in Anna G. Piotrowska, 'Modernist Composers and the Concept of Genius', *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 38.2 (December, 2007), 249-242.

¹⁶ Catherine Parsons Smith, "'A Distinguishing Virility': Feminism and Modernism in American Art Music," in *Cecilia Reclaimed* (1994), 90-106; 92.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 99.

¹⁸ Aaron Copland, *Copland on Music* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1960), 84-85.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, 85.

Copland's statement could easily pass for the attitude held in the European New Music scene today—whilst her male counterparts might already be automatically endowed with the title 'composer' a female musician in the same profession must first work to drop the gendered form of this title in favour of what is characterized as a neutral but is really a male term—'composer'.²⁰ The ideology of materialism is, therefore, both a philosophical issue and a political one within music. Lacan writes that, '[t]here is nothing more philosophical than materialism.'²¹ Furthermore, Judith Butler writes that subjectivity itself, which, in the context of the New Music conception of the composer stands in relation to material is political:

[t]he subject is an accomplishment regulated and produced in advance. And is as such fully political; indeed perhaps *most* political at the point at which it is claimed to be prior to politics itself.²²

Therefore, music composition—a meeting of the subjectivity of the composer and 'material'—is not a neutral activity but a social practice. And, as Michelle M. Lazar writes, social practices on the whole, far from being neutral, are gendered [...]. First, 'gender' functions as an interpretative category that enables participants in a community to make sense of and structure their social practices. Second, gender is a social relation that enters into and partially constitutes all other social relations and activities. Based on the specific, asymmetric meanings of 'male' and 'female', and the consequences being assigned to one or the other within concrete social practices, such an allocation becomes a constraint on further practices.²³

I argue that the gendered nature of material leads to a preference of women composers whose music can be gendered as male and meets the terms of the discourse of materialism, rather than an outright preference for male over female composers. Rather than an explicit discrimination against women as a group this creates a more implicit discrimination of women who can only be spoken about in female terms (women who do not meet the materialistic and historical terms of the discourse). Aaron Copland's statement illustrates this problem: for him it is a statement about musical quality, but it is really a statement about the materiality of

²⁰ This is linked to the perceived need for women to overperform at work, discussed in both Luisa Martín and Concepción Gómez Esteban, 'The Gender of Power: The Female Style in Labor Organisations', in *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis*, ed. Michelle M. Lazar (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 61-89 and Aino Saarinen, 'Feminist Research: In search of a New Paradigm?', *Acta Sociologica*, 31.1, (1988) 35-51. It is also different from the German distinction 'Komponist'/'Komponistin' which is a linguistic but not an ideological distinction.

²¹ Jacques Lacan, 'God and the *Jouissance of Woman*: A love letter', in *Feminine Sexuality* quoted in Diane Elam, *Feminism and Deconstruction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994; 2003) 61.

²² Judith Butler, 'Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of Postmodernism', in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, eds. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York and London: Routledge, 1992) 13 quoted in Elam, *Feminism and Deconstruction*, 70.

²³ Michelle M. Lazar, 'Politicizing Gender in Discourse: Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis as Political Perspective and Praxis', in *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis*, 1-30; 5.

Boulanger's music. This has two consequences: those women composers who have not achieved acceptance by the New Music institution are not-yet-composers (not-yet-subjects), whilst those women composers who are accepted are presented as pillars of possibility, examples to other women; their difference is valued so they can stand as symbols of equality, but it is also diminished in order that they become subsumed into the male discourse of material.

In order to illustrate this I will briefly describe two examples of recent pieces by women composers. The two pieces are Jennifer Walshe's opera *XXX Live Nude Girls!!!* (2003) and Rebecca Saunders's *Caerulean* (2010). The instrumentation and materials used in each work seem quite polarized. Walshe's opera is scored for 2 female voices, 2 puppeteers, 2 camera operators, CD, a small chamber ensemble and barbie dolls. The barbie dolls take on the roles of the main characters, forming the visual material of the opera on stage and also projected onto a screen; parts of the barbie dolls are also used to realize certain playing techniques within the ensemble and thus the dolls link the sonic and visual material throughout the work. Saunders's work is scored for solo bass clarinet. It is not a dramatic work but arises from a detailed study of bass clarinet multiphonics, made in collaboration with an established accomplished contemporary music clarinet performer, Carl Rosman. Although very different on the surface, the linking actor between the two works is the issue of extended instrumental technique, which is in some ways central to both compositions as they offer the listener 'new', unexpected, or extended approaches to sound in their instrumentation. In order to briefly compare the reception and discourse around these two works I have taken and examined statements which come from reviews of, or discussion around the two pieces. It is also important to note that the final reviews and statements chosen as examples were all taken from positive interpretations of both works; this is not a case of a preference by any of the parties particularly for one composer and piece over the other, but only of the use of gendered statements in discourse.

The first statements concern Rebecca Saunders and the piece *Caerulean*. Before this piece was performed at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival in 2010, Saunders was interviewed by Graham McKenzie, the artistic director of the festival. Addressing Saunders about her career, says to her:

you've developed a very particular relationship with some of arguably the best contemporary music ensembles in the world: Recherche, musikFabrik.²⁴

Here, McKenzie emphasizes the quality of Saunders's work as a composer through her relationships with, and thus validation by, established (male) contemporary music institutions rather than through the materiality of her pieces. He regards her institutional relationships as a sign of musical quality. This agrees with Adorno's conception of 'New Music', when he writes, '[t]he concept of 'new music' simply confirms the way it is institutionalized in studios, special societies and concerts.'²⁵ Adorno further claims that 'such organisations inadvertently negate [new music's] claims to truth and hence universal appeal, even though without them its cause would be hopelessly lost.'²⁶ So, the claim here is not that association with such ensembles is negative, but that materiality is assumed simply through association.

Rebecca Saunders then describes to McKenzie the work undertaken in the project to create her solo bass clarinet piece in collaboration with the performer. She states:

we started discovering sounds in 2003.²⁷

In this short statement, Saunders describes two facets of her work. By naming the process of composition as a process of 'discovering sounds' she identifies a process of engaging with the 'new' similar to that described by Dahlhaus. She infers that her music will present the innovative results of a collaboration, that arise from an exploratory or experimental process. Her reference to the beginning of this process taking place in 2003 is significant as, speaking in 2010, she also draws attention the time that has been taken on the composition.

The materiality of Saunders's work, and its link with her compositional and collaborative processes is also described by her collaborator Carl Rosman. Writing for Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival where the premiere of the piece took place, says of her work in general:

²⁴ Rebecca Saunders with Graham McKenzie, *Pre-Concert Talk* (St Paul's Hall, Huddersfield: HCMF, 20.11.2010), transcript, 2. Audio archived at [hcmf//](http://www.hcmf.co.uk/), 'download free talks from hcmf// 2010', last modified 2010, <http://www.hcmf.co.uk/Download-free-talks-from-hcmf-2010>. Transcript archived at [hcmf//, www.hcmf.co.uk/doc/download/51](http://www.hcmf.co.uk/doc/download/51).

²⁵ Theodor Adorno, 'Music and New Music', in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, (1963) 2002) 249-268; 250.

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ Saunders with McKenzie, *Pre-Concert Talk*, 3.

her music in general moves back and forth between almost impalpable delicacy and extreme violence.²⁸

In this statement, Rosman emphasizes Saunders's compositional control and technique. He places her music at the far reaches of what is achievable in contemporary music, and as such he also implies that there is connoisseurship in the appreciation of her music. Rosman has also spoken publicly at length about their collaboration. In a transcript from a podcast about his work and the piece, published on the website of musikFabrik (the New Music ensemble he regularly performs with), he states:

I guess it's the way that Rebecca always works, I think, is that she establishes a particular-she focusses on a particular area of technique. It wouldn't normally be a classically essential area. It was basically one kind of multiphonic we worked on. And there's one particular kind of multiphonic with clarinets. Some multiphonics are quirky. Some multiphonics, it's a bit hard to pin down. what notes there are, how many notes there are. And then there is a certain kind of outcome where, in contrast to that, you hear two very pure notes quite clearly.²⁹

In this statement, Rosman again emphasizes the precision, focus, and specificity of outcome in Saunders's music, and in this case in particular when she composes using extended instrumental techniques. These statements, taken as a whole, paint a picture of a composer who works in extreme detail with extended techniques and sound. In addition, the description of her collaboration with the performer as central in accessing this detail causes the New Music institution to become part of the materiality of the work itself. It is important that she collaborated not only with *a* performer, but with *this* performer. In this way the materiality of her work, assumed through her association with particular institutions, is validated by her inclusion of institutions in its materiality. This, then, affords her compositional technique and approach close attention as both accomplished and legitimate.

Reviews and assessments of Jennifer Walshe's opera also most frequently draw attention to her use of extended sound and techniques. Christopher Fox's review in *The Guardian* on the premiere of *XXX Live Nude Girls!!!* states that:

²⁸ Carl Rosman, *Blurring Boundaries: Performing Rebecca Saunders*, hcmf//, last modified 2011, accessed 01 February 2011, <<http://www.hcmf.co.uk/page/show/131>>. This page is no longer archived on the hcmf// site.

²⁹ Carl Rosman, *Carl Rosman-Clarinet*, musikFabrik blog, last modified 02.03.2011, <http://musikfabrik-blog.eu/2011/03/02/carl-rosman-clarinet/>.

the musicians scratch at their instruments, exploring Walshe's trademark lo-fi white noise.³⁰

The language used highlights some of the differences in the reception of the two composers. In Fox's description, the result of the use of technique in Walshe's music is imprecise and unrefined. While the assessment of Saunders's music made clear the effort made in finding the correct sounds, here the focus is on the sounds themselves as extraneous and alienating. As it is the musicians rather than the composer who are doing the 'exploring' in this case, this assessment of the work can also be understood as implying that the compositional work is done by the musicians and not by the composer. He further pinpoints this as a feature of her music as a whole. Further to this, the Contemporary Music Centre Ireland, when providing an overview of Walshe's work write of *XXX Live Nude Girls!!!* that it implies that:

the conventional definition of what opera is or who its audience should be will have to be abandoned.³¹

Despite being a positive assessment of Walshe's work—a post intended to promote the work of an Irish composer—this statement places her opera outside of operatic or contemporary music tradition and the contemporary music audiences who might watch it; this is particularly pertinent when it could be considered that the opera does have a direct relationship with the Mozartian tradition of marionette operas. Again, the focus is on the alienating rather than the compositional.

Finally, the entry for *XXX Live Nude Girls!!!* in *The Multimedia Encyclopedia of Women in Today's World* also brings out these same features. Courtney Cauthon, its author, writes:

The score is unmelodic and harsh. The vocalists sing, shout, whisper, and speak. The musicians play instruments, but also make sounds using objects such as telephones and toy cars. The marionettes are not traditional puppets, but instead are Barbie dolls [...]. In the performance, there is little done to make the production seem realistic.³²

³⁰ Christopher Fox, 'Barbie: The Opera', *The Guardian*, 24 October 2003, accessed 26 September 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2003/oct/24/classicalmusicandopera1>.

³¹ Michael Duggan, 'Opera: Just Another Art Form?' The Contemporary Music Centre Ireland, last modified 2003, accessed 26 September 2012, <http://www.cmc.ie/articles/article652.html>.

³² Cauthon, Courtney. "XXX Live Nude Girls!!!" In *The Multimedia Encyclopedia of Women in Today's World*, 2nd ed., edited by Mary Zeiss Stange, Carol K. Oyster and Jane E. Sloan, 2207-10; 2207. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2013. doi: 10.4135/9781452270388.n483.

Although the author gives this description as evidence of the notability and uniqueness of the work, she also makes the same claims for the work that arise from its materiality and use of technique: the work is outside of a tradition, the techniques employed by the performers are outside of a musical approach to performance, the sound is alienating.

The conclusions that can be drawn about the differing reception of these two composers, as demonstrated by these statements, are summarized in this table:

Rebecca Saunders, <i>Caerulean</i>	Jennifer Walshe, <i>XXX Live Nude Girls!!!</i>
The piece is 'internal', arising from thought	The piece is external, arising from action
Her use of extended technique is complex, and exploratory	Her use of extended technique is noisy and unrefined
The piece is an extension of the clarinet within the 'New Music' tradition	The piece is outside of the 'New Music' tradition
Her compositional approach is complex and conceptual	Her compositional approach is social, visual and tactile

Table 1: Comparison of Saunders's and Walshe's works arising from discourse analysis

The major difference here is the perception of the material used by the composers, particularly where extended uses of sound and instrumental technique are concerned, and the perception of the relationship of the composers with their own material. The link of the compositional act, material, and subjectivity is therefore evident within the reception of these works. A gendered difference is constructed between the music of the two women not only because of the difference in reception itself but because of the specific: one piece belongs to thought, to tradition, to complexity, and to sustained investigation; the other to 'unthinking' action, to the senses and is outside of the accepted norms. They fall into a male:female structuralist binary.

This discussion in no way speaks to the quality or value of the music at hand, or the accomplishment of either composer. Both were selected, in part, because their works are increasingly but perhaps equally well known and celebrated. The conclusion is not that the quality of the music is less in the case of either composer, nor that either composer is more genuinely a 'female composer' than the other, nor that the experience of either composer causes them to be less of a subject than the other. I hope to emphasize that the system of values, by which both composers are judged, in the context of 'New Music' prefers the music which holds most in common with a male, patriarchal, discourse of material; that the label

‘female composer’ is, on the terms of this discourse, reserved as a derogatory term which might be excused should one’s music appear to negate the ‘female’ part of this label; and that the notion of a New Music subject is only credible when conceived of as one who accepts the terms of the discourse and its restrictions and limitations on behalf of the composer. In this respect, then, Jennifer Walshe is not a ‘composer’ (subject) nor is what she creates ‘music’ since its materiality is one which is against the dominant discourse.

Aino Saarinen describes similar issues within scientific research as colouring research institutions as, ‘cultural and ideological institutions of domination’,³³ and this is the role that the New Music institution takes on in my reading. In such an environment, Aino Saarinen writes that Margit Eichler perceives that, ‘women’s goals and activities are seen as functions of the goals and activities of men.’³⁴ This is subtle since it allows the institution to claim inclusivity by denying that there is any other state of affairs to be included in; it is linked with the erroneous conceptualization that men are neutral meaning that any struggle for women’s equal representation within the institution becomes what Diane Elam describes as, ‘the struggle for women’s rights to be men.’³⁵

One conclusion that can be drawn from this, then, is that the discourse of material is a form of social closure, described by Luisa Martín and Concepción Gómez Esteban as, ‘a process through which social groups attempt to maintain exclusive control over resources [...] by restricting access to them.’³⁶ The resources in question here, such as restricted arts funding, are not themselves gendered, but the process of maintaining them for the limited groups who already control them infers the need for patriochialism.³⁷ But also worth considering is Nancy Harstock’s statement that, ‘power and community are closely linked.’³⁸ In order to maintain the idea of a structured New Music community, it may seem that gendered power

³³ Saarinen, ‘Feminist Research: In search of a New Paradigm?’, 37.

³⁴ Margrit Eichler, *The Double Standard. A Feminist Critique of Feminist Social Sciences* (London: Croon Helm, 1980) 118-119 in Saarinen, ‘Feminist Research: In search of a New Paradigm?’, 38.

³⁵ Elam, *Feminism and Deconstruction*, 60.

³⁶ Luisa Martín and Concepción Gómez Esteban, ‘The Gender of Power: The Female Style in Labor Organisations’. in *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis*, ed. by Michelle M. Lazar (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) pp.61-89; p.75.

³⁷ “‘patriochialism’”: the assumption that women are a subgroup, that “man’s world” is the “real” world, that patriarchy is equivalent to culture and culture to patriarchy, that the “great” or “liberalizing” periods of history have been the same for women as for men.’ Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (New York: Norton, 1976) p.16.

³⁸ Nancy C. M. Harstock, *Money, Sex, and Power: Towards a Feminist Historical Materialism* (New York and London: Longman, 1983) p.31.

relationships need to be preserved. Harstock writes that, '[m]en's power to structure social relations in their own image means that women too must participate in social relations that manifest and express abstract masculinity.'³⁹

However, the link between the perceived relationship of the composer with their material and the notion of a New Music subjectivity is a key concept in which this social closure is enacted. Elizabeth Grosz addresses subjectivity and women's activities when she writes:

The question of freedom for women, or for any oppressed social group, is never simply a question of expanding the range of available options so much as it is about transforming the quality and activity of subjects who choose and made themselves through how and what they do.⁴⁰

And further that,

The problem, rather, is how to expand the variety of activities and knowledge production so that women and men may be able to act differently and open up activities to new interests, perspectives, and frameworks hitherto not adequately explored or invented.⁴¹

In order to enact this within New Music a move not just from a particular definition of material but from a materialist conception of the work to a more open definition is required.

Consideration of materialism in Derrida's writing leads Pheng Cheah to say that, 'the force of materiality is nothing other than the constitutive exposure of (the subject of) power to the other.'⁴² The link between power, materialism, and subjectivity is at the heart of the critical relationship with Walshe's and Saunders's work that influences their reception. Sonia Kinks writes that materialist theories traditionally, 'emphasize the ways in which subjectivity arises as the reflex of expression of social practices, or as the effect of discourses,'⁴³ which has been the case here. I have emphasized that within the New Music discourse materialism functions to create composers as subjects only in their interaction with specific materials and the interaction of these materials with each other. Thus, 'composer' presented as a neutral term is

³⁹ Harstock, *Money, Sex, and Power: Towards a Feminist Historical Materialism*, 245.

⁴⁰ Elizabeth Grosz, 'Feminism, Materialism and Freedom', in *New Materialism: Ontology, Agency and Politics*, eds. Diana Coole and Samantha Frost (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 139-157; 151.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 154.

⁴² Pheng Cheah, 'Non-Dialectical Materialism', in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*, 70-91; 81.

⁴³ Sonia Kinks, 'Simone de Beauvoir: Engaging Discrepant Materialisms' in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*, 258-280; 259.

really a male term, whilst 'female' composers must work to drop the preface and become neutral but therefore male. Equally, the use of material composers must aspire to is not neutral but a male exclusionary construct, and quality in this context is the ability to execute the discourse of material to an acceptable degree within one's compositions. This, then, prevents female (and male) composers who wish to produce something outside of this discourse from entering into the social practice and excludes composers and music which do(es) not fit into it. As a result, the possibility for social change through integration of 'othered' elements is slim. Patrio-chialism in new music is, therefore, not merely a preference and perseverance of male-dominated institutions but a consequence of the materialism of New Music itself.