CITATION TACTICS

5 The question of citation practice has run throughout the book thus far and is the principal focus of this chapter. I have argued that the citation practices internal to Western feminist narratives of progress, loss, and return are partly what enable a combined chronology across the strands, and that these similarities go a long way to producing a shared vision of both what has happened in the past and what needs to happen in the future. Citation practices produce consensus on the difference between eras of feminist theory, however these are valued, and they allow the narrator to remain the subject of feminist theory in the present, however hard she must struggle to retain this position. Citation—direct, or indicated by its absence—is a central technique through which feminism is marked out as epistemologically, politically, and temporally distinct from poststructuralism, and this difference is key to the sense of the present as one in which we have turned, or are turning, away from culture.[1]

To recap briefly, Western feminist progress narratives' insistence that feminist theory has moved to a more expansive present, one full of new epistemological innovation and complex objects and analytic frames, relies on a flattened vision of the feminist past. To claim unparalleled vibrancy of a postmodern or poststructuralist project in the present, progress narratives rarely cite the 1970s directly, position the 1980s as the exclusive decade of identity politics, and position the 1990s as the era of intersectional complexity. In citation terms, this carving up of the past into neat decades means that the 1970s comes to carry the singular weight of an essentialism now past, the 1980s becomes overburdened with the citation of black and/or lesbian feminist authors, who rarely make it into the 1990s (except as postcolonial or queer theorists), while the 1990s teems with individual authors whose marked similarity to and difference from one another underlines the comparative intricacy of this period. Loss narratives mark the distinction between decades in a similar fashion, but inflect each period with counter-investments or alternative politics. Here, instead, the 1990s carries the generalized weight of a depoliticized move away from feminism proper, and key theorists are either singularly invoked as emblematic of this move, or noticeably absent, while the 1970s and the 1980s (where extra-institutional) are gestured towards but their interlocutors rarely specified. Indeed, loss and return narratives both suffer from a general citation scarcity. Return narratives' citation practices are similar to those of loss narratives, but more consistently reference the work of key figures (from the 1990s) in order to signal cultural theory's break from a more appropriate concern with materiality. They may also cite the 1970s or 1980s as exceptionally political in comparison to contemporary theoretical preoccupations through individual or decade reference.

As discussed in some depth in part 1, these citation practices do not simply produce a superficial but otherwise more or less accurate history, as is to be expected in any general account. They do not simply gesture towards a more complex past that cannot at that moment be specifically delineated. They are not practices that simply lack depth. They are productive rather than descriptive narratives of the recent past, giving us accounts in which specific contributions to that history—black and lesbian feminist contributions—are by turns erased or fetishized. But Western feminist stories are also ambivalent about these contributions in ways that remain unresolved. Thus, for progress narratives to position the pres-

ent as more complex and attentive to difference than the past, black feminism figures as important, but primarily as *catalyst*, constrained by its citation as a 1980s critique. It is neither part of the 1970s (which must remain essentialist) nor fully part of the present that has transcended identity. Lesbian feminism, in contrast, is variously located as that which black feminism critiques (i.e., cited as a 1970s phenomenon) or as part of the critique of heteronormativity in the 1980s that ultimately leads to the present of queer theoretical maturity. Black and lesbian feminism are still more ambivalently located in loss and return accounts, which have to tell the story of a progressive depoliticization up to the present moment. In loss narratives this tends to be resolved by citational absence—just not mentioning black or lesbian feminist work at all—or by firmly identifying the difficulty as one of institutional identification over political attachment. In return narratives, queer theory is sutured to "the problem of culture," now fully surpassed, while black or postcolonial feminist theories are evacuated from the historical record in order to be found anew in the present.[2] In each case, citation practices secure the chronology and affect central to narrative momentum, and in each case, these erasures are incomplete or resonant, haunting the present in ways that might usefully be magnified.

I have been arguing, then, that poststructuralism is kept apart from feminism in Western feminist storytelling at a profoundly high cost and that these generalities produce a common sense of the recent past that reduces accountability and fosters amenability in relation to broader mobilizations of gender and feminism, as discussed in the previous chapter. I want to continue this attention to citation practice in the dominant narratives of Western feminist theory here, by homing in more closely on the citation of particular authors as emblematic of the distinction between feminism and poststructuralism, over and above the general citation practices of decades, politics, and epistemologies. More precisely, this chapter examines the role given to Judith Butler and her work (particularly *Gender Trouble* [1990]) in precipitating the shift from (feminist) politics to (queer) culture. As discussed in part 1, Butler is consistently credited in Western feminist stories with being "the first" to challenge the category "woman" as the foundation of feminist inquiry, and she is overwhelmingly cited as representative of the 1990s, whether celebrated or demonized. Here I consider more fully the importance of Butler's cited presence in

all three strands of Western feminist storytelling, in terms of the work this does to position sexual critique as antithetical to feminist critique. Further, I examine Butler's role in this respect through her own cited influences in the same narratives. As suggested in chapter 1, Butler is consistently cited as the inheritor of a male theoretical legacy over and above her feminist (or female) influences. Once again my attention will be on what is excluded from this historical record by particular citation practices and on what hovers around citation pushing on its historiographic limits.

This chapter further relies on and develops my own citation practices as a set of tactical responses to the problems of citation in the securing of the dominant narratives I am unpicking. The first tactic will already be familiar from the previous chapters, namely the citation of narrative glosses by journal location and date, rather than by author. While loath to repeat myself too much here, I want to emphasize nevertheless that this tactic has two useful effects that are heightened in this chapter. First, it emphasizes these citation practices as held "in common" rather than being individual practices. This is important in terms of underscoring that my concern is not with individual interpretations of Butler's (or anyone else's) work, but with the centrality of *how she is cited* for the coherence of Western feminist narratives of progress, loss, and return. Second, it emphasizes the narrative construction of hierarchy (star status) as embedded in feminist historiography, rather than as peripheral to it. It has become commonplace to critique "famous" academic feminists for reproducing rather than challenging hierarchies, yet my analysis makes clear that selective citation is essential to how Western feminist stories work. We produce feminist chronologies in which decades (in general) need to be associated with authors (in particular) if our broader claims of progress, loss, and return are to make sense. My de-authorizing citation tactics are thus intended to reveal the problems of citation that themselves authorize the dominant strands of Western feminist storytelling that I am interested in challenging. I use this approach to bring into relief the political grammar at the heart of feminist narrative, to shine a spotlight on its construction and function.

Yet these tactics of de-authorization can only go so far, as I indicated at the end of the last chapter on narrative amenability. Even at their most effective, they can only reveal what is already dominant, which is not where I want to end my analysis. A feminist political renarration, which I

would describe as the intervention into dominant feminist narratives with the aim of making them less amenable to global spatial and temporal hierarchization, will need something further. Thus, I extend my citation tactics in this chapter to try and follow the traces of what hovers around the edges of these citations of Butler and her antecedents. In this chapter I develop a citation strategy I am calling feminist *recitation*, in which some of the hauntings of Western feminist stories that matter to me are folded back into the textual heart of narratives of progress, loss, and return. Starting from what my own affect and memory inform me is excluded from a historiography that separates feminism and poststructuralism, I meddle with citation more directly. The recitations that result are intended to open up myriad other histories and to be suggestive of alternative modes of institutional, political engagement in the present.

ODD COUPLES

In chapter 1, I began discussion of the role of key figures in securing Western feminist progress narratives. Depending on the discipline or interdisciplinary area of a given journal, theorists such as Donna Haraway, Gayatri Spivak, and Judith Butler are cited as provoking a shift from one form of feminist analysis to a radically different one, and often away from feminism altogether.[3] Of these, Judith Butler is by far the most commonly invoked of her cohort. Whether for progress, loss, or return narratives, Butler is routinely positioned as forcing feminist theory onwards, beyond itself. The following two excerpts are typical (and probably very familiar) examples of this situating of Butler:[4]

> Perhaps more than any other feminist theorist, she [Butler] has systematically elaborated a way of understanding gender identity as deeply entrenched but not immutable and has thereby pushed feminist theory beyond the polarities of the essentialist debate. (*Theory, Culture and Society* 1999)[5]

> At least since Judith Butler's seminal book *Gender Trouble*, published in 1990, feminist and gender studies have been concerned with how new conceptions of the body affect and reform disciplinary questions in the humanities, as well as to some extent in the natural and social sciences. (*Nora* 2002)

Butler marks—indeed "pushes"—feminist theory and gender identity into a new era, the impact of which has resonated across disciplinary arenas.

Butler is located as quintessentially poststructuralist, such that it is her interpretation of *this* tradition (and no other) that moves feminist theory "beyond the polarities" of previous accounts of gender relations. Thus,

> Judith Butler transformed the study of gender by using Foucault to apply post-structuralist conceptions of the subject to it. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2000)

We can see already from these few examples, then, that there is a tension between feminist theory, on the one hand, and its transformation via poststructuralism into "something else," on the other. Butler's citation (and the citation of similar figures where relevant) consistently signals the death of one way of thinking and the inception of a newer, entirely different one in progress, loss, and return narratives: it rarely evidences ongoing contests within feminism over the study of gender, women, or feminism. This sense of radical alteration is facilitated in the above excerpts by the textual movement between feminist theory and gender (or gender studies, or identity), which ensures that we are not merely moving between feminist phases, but rather also moving away from feminism itself with these poststructuralist shifts.[6]

The clearest way in which key theorists are textually framed as initiating changes in feminist theory that ultimately lead to its demise or thorough transformation is the situating of those theorists themselves as primarily engaged with, or even dependent upon, the male theorists on whom they draw. And indeed representation of key feminist figures through their male antecedents or contemporaries is the single most important technique through which feminism is separated from the cultural turn said to be its death knell. The following statements are typical of this kind of citation practice:

> Haraway must acknowledge a siblingship with Derrida over those central questions of humanism concerning origin, authenticity and universality. (*Body and Society* 1996)

> To certify the Derridean assumptions upon which thinkers like Spivak draw. (*Critical Inquiry* 1998)

> The Foucauldian critique represented by Butler and others has only recently been introduced into gender studies. (*Nora* 2002)

At one level these citation practices are uncontroversial. It is, after all, quite true that Haraway has an affinity with Derrida, and Spivak all the

more so. These theorists do indeed take up Derrida in a range of ways and develop conversations across disciplines and traditions in part through this affinity. And no one who has read Butler could fail to recognize her debt to and development of Foucault in the context of feminist analysis. She engages his work directly in much of hers, and in my view gender studies is much the richer for that dialogue. But what is striking across the journals I have been analyzing is the repeated nature of these citations in common sense glosses, over and above any other ways of locating these theorists. My concern is not, in other words, with the representation of these theorists as engaged with Derrida or Foucault—they are indeed so engaged—but with the uniform representation of that engagement as primary or exclusive.

The citation of key feminist theorists' antecedents as peculiarly male underscores the separation of feminism and poststructuralism that is key to how Western feminist stories work in several ways. On the one hand, it marks this separation in the moment of citation itself, moving the feminist theorist cited out of a feminist tradition. She is not only a critic of feminism or gender studies, but criticizes out of an attachment to her male antecedents. At another level, then, this representation of antecedents signals an attachment to the single male over the history of feminist theory, a point I will come back to below in discussing citation of Butler more fully. This representation of Spivak, Haraway, and Butler as "Derridean" or "Foucauldian" then, might be properly thought of as "hetero-citational," in that it utilizes the opposite sex couple form to mark the shift away from feminism, whether positively or negatively viewed. On another level, these couplings transform what we think of as feminism and poststructuralism too. They mark poststructuralism itself as male and the attachment to these (prior) figures as the application of poststructuralism to a radically distinct arena, feminism. It is feminism that is transformed by the hetero-citational attachment; poststructuralism remains unmoved by the encounter, it seems.

In effect, these hetero-citational practices produce not so much a moment of reflexive reconsideration of feminism and its direction, but the instantiation of a *parallel* theoretical teleology to feminism, one that intersects with it only at this particular moment of critique. In casting her lot with her male antecedents, our feminist heroine does not only take feminism as an object of critique, however. She also operates as a feminist (or postcolonial, or queer) endorsement of that parallel teleology in progress

narratives. Her "feminist" nature may need to be in quotes, but it does need to be present. If Spivak, Haraway, or Butler attach to the Derridean or the Foucauldian over the feminist critique, then perhaps these male theorists' attention to difference really is superior. In progress narratives, then, deconstruction, not feminism, is the defender of difference. For example:

> The deconstructive project comes to the defense of difference, in opposition to "the founding of a hysterocentric to counter a phallic discourse." (Spivak, 1983: 184) . . . While nearly all feminist theory at some level opposes binary opposition, the deconstructivists are the most radical in their call for an opposition to sexual dualism itself in the name of "the multiplicity of sexually marked voices," or relationships that "would not be a-sexual, far from it, but would be sexual otherwise: beyond the binary difference that governs the decorum of all codes" (Derrida, 1982: 76). (*Signs* 1991)

Deconstructivist feminist theory carries the day in the above excerpt, and so, one might argue, feminism's critical role remains intact. But this "deconstructive project" is explicitly defined against feminist masquerades in which "sexual dualism" is the pretender to a radical throne. As I suggested in my mapping of progress narratives in chapter 1, citation of Spivak in such a context marks "the founding of a hysterocentric" as not only essentialist and old-fashioned, but as also ethnocentric or racist. This implicit citation of "1970s feminism" is negotiated both through the terms employed, and the citation frame of the 1980s. And this irredeemable radical feminism is further contrasted with the "most radical" deconstructionists, in this case, finally, Derrida. In the hetero-citational suturing of Spivak to Derrida, here as elsewhere, Spivak is the reference that guarantees that the attention to difference remains "feminist." Yet, of course, that attachment concomitantly moves her away from feminism textually and historiographically, a facet of this citation practice not lost on those who adhere to loss or return narratives.

As indicated above, it is Butler who is most continually positioned as the theorist responsible for moving feminist theory away from itself. And to really underline how this "hetero-citation practice" works to keep poststructuralism and feminism separate, it is to citation of her influence on and participation in feminism that I now turn. The excerpts positioning Butler as the first to challenge a sex/gender distinction, or the first to challenge the ontological grounding of feminist epistemology in the cate-

gory "woman," also consistently cite her primary intellectual influence as Michel Foucault, as the examples from *Nora* and *Australian Feminist Studies* above suggest. Indeed, Butler's critique of existing feminist theory is routinely described simply as "Foucauldian." In addition to the above excerpts, let us consider the following, which serve to highlight some of the different ways in which Butler and Foucault are conjoined:

> Feminists inspired by, among others, Michel Foucault, however, have questioned this understanding of feminism as critique with reference to Foucault's arguments for the existence of an immanent relation between power and knowledge. Judith Butler, for instance, thus understands feminist critique as a theoretical exercise that is always already implicated in the very relations of power it seeks to adjudicate (Butler 1995b, 139). (*Nora* 2004)

> One especially revealing feature of Butler's style is the preponderance of subject-verb disagreements. I want to speculate that this penchant, by reflecting the difficulty of sustaining a Foucauldian critique of the singular self and the biological body, reveals the tensions continually at play in efforts to combine poststructuralism with feminism. (*Critical Inquiry* 1998)

> Foucault and Butler and the influence of discourses of race have served to make many scholars wary of the categories man and woman, for fear of the "sin" of essentialism, of assuming a pre-formed individual identity. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2000)

> During the recent decade feminist sport studies have, as feminist scholarships in general, been strongly influenced by post-structural approaches and the social constructionist paradigm, for example the contributions of Michel Foucault (e.g. 1979, 1990) and Judith Butler (e.g. 1990, 1993). (*Nora* 2006)

At one level, these juxtapositions underpin the primary assertion in such glosses, namely that Butler is front and centre among feminists in her challenges to female essentialism. This framing isolates her in ways discussed in relation to other theorists, above, and textually reiterates that she emerges finally, not from feminism, but from a parallel, male poststructuralist teleology. As acknowledged above, this repeated positioning of Foucault and Butler is entirely appropriate in many ways. Butler does consistently cite Foucault in her writing; Foucault's work does indeed pre-date Butler's. In these respects there is nothing amiss. But the sheer repetition of this direct and exclusive influence across progress, loss, and return

narratives that cite Butler asks me to look at little closer at this otherwise self-evident proximity, to ask how this coupling is secured and to explore what it precludes. An initial comment concerns the hierarchies made manifest in this particular hetero-citational relationship. This is not an equal relationship; it is one of inheritance and debt, and is consistently represented as such. Butler's progress, her ability to transform feminism, arises in and through her adoption of the uniquely Foucauldian approach. In the first two examples above, Butler derives her perspective and style, understands or represents things, *because of* Foucault: "Butler's account of agency *relies* on Foucault's idea of 'subjectivation' which denotes the dialectical aspect of identity formation" (*Theory, Culture and Society* 1999; my emphasis), for example. Since this reliance is concomitantly represented as the chief intellectual development in her work, Butler's transformation of feminism itself is rendered derivative.

The latter examples operate slightly differently. In the excerpt from *Australian Feminist Studies*, "the categories man and woman" come under attack from the combined forces of Foucault and Butler and "the influence of discourses of race." Based on my analysis of race in Western feminist narratives of progress, loss, and return in part 1, I read this alliance in part as performing the "rescue" of critical race critique from the accusation of its over-reliance on identity. But if we read outside of this understanding, the extract more straightforwardly pits these combined forces against feminist essentialist sinners. The last excerpt demonstrates, to my mind, some of the routine work achieved by citation of Foucault and Butler together. While frequently cited as mere "examples" of a poststructuralist approach (see also the "among others" and "for instance" of the first excerpt from *Nora*, above), their repeated combined appearance operates to secure their critique as occurring from outside of, rather than from within, feminist scholarship. Indeed, the juxtaposition of Butler-and-Foucault is so common that even where she is not directly cited, it is hard not to read in Butler's textual resonance. For example, in the following extract from *Nora*, only Foucault is referenced in terms of his influence on the field:

> During the 1980s and 90s the concepts of patriarchy and feminism gradually disappeared from women's studies and gender research in the Nordic countries. Instead, many researchers took inspiration from discourse theory, especially from the works of Michel Foucault. (*Nora* 2004)

Although Butler is not named in this rather familiar gloss, the repetition of her pairing with Foucault across *Nora* and the range of journals I have been concerned with means that she is intertextually resonant. She lingers in the passively rendered disappearance of the concept of "patriarchy," and in the wholesale shift from feminism to discourse theory whose teleology I have been discussing thus far and for which she is responsible (in choosing Foucault over other partnerships).

Butler's over-association with Foucault does not in itself effect a separation of poststructuralism and feminism, although it certainly exerts considerable influence in that direction. This division is also secured through positioning other feminist theorists in relation to the parallel trajectory I have been delineating in particular ways. One common tactic in progress narratives is the citation of Butler and other feminist theorists as providing the necessary critique of natural "sex," but with Butler retaining her position as "the first" either explicitly or implicitly:

> From a Foucauldian perspective, the making of the gendered self, or gender identity, is the product of disciplinary practices of the body that ensure the reproduction of heterosexuality as the norm. The body is seen as material that is enrolled in the production of gender rather than as providing the biological foundation for gender differences (Butler, 1993; Grosz, 1994). (*Body and Society* 2002)

Here, then, Butler and Grosz are both cited, but it is a later Grosz text that is referenced to evidence her own critique of biological foundationalism. Butler thus remains textually identified with forerunner Foucault, the chain of inheritance made safe. In the rather more negative formulation of the same relationships effected in loss narratives, other feminist theorists are often positioned as critics of Butler in her Foucauldian association. To continue with the citation of Grosz, in the following loss narrative gloss from the same journal, Grosz and Butler are antagonists:

> Grosz is critical of Butler (1990) precisely because she does attempt to retrieve the concept of gender within the Foucauldian optic. Butler wrenches the body away from a discrete ontology of substance designated by the marker "sex," and reinstates it—together with sex—*within* the category of gender. (*Body and Society* 2000)

Grosz is wary of Butler because of the same association that is celebrated in the slightly later progress narrative from 2002. Instead of providing

needed reflection on the limits of an essentialized ontological foundation in feminism, Butler—applying "the Foucauldian optic"—violently "wrenches" apart signifier and signified. The tone of the extract is interesting here too: one might say that Butler is cited as male-identified in two senses. She allies herself with Foucault, as we have already seen, and she forces sex and the body apart in a violent mode: she "wrenches" rather than, say, teases the two away from one another. Thus Butler's citation produces her as male-identified in terms of the company she keeps and in the way she behaves.

Western feminist loss and return narratives generally endorse this association of Butler with Foucault, frequently blaming her errors of judgement on his bad influence. The following is typical:

> Recently there have been a number of constructive critiques of Butler's Foucauldian concept of power. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2002)

It is not Butler per se who is challenged here, but her "Foucauldian concept of power." These "constructive critiques" seem mild enough, indeed they identify the problem as ostensibly lying somewhere else, namely with Foucault, but in the process Butler's work is reduced to this association. As the next two extracts affirm, she is textually cast as easily influenced, as blind to the limits of Foucault's ideas for a feminist analysis, and thus also often as important but misguided:

> Possibly because of its difficult task of dislodging commonly held assumptions, possibly because of the influence of Foucault and Derrida, recondite abstractions characterize postmodernist feminist theory in general and Butler's books in particular. (*Critical Inquiry* 1998)

> For Butler, on the authority of Foucault and Derrida respectively, the possibility of resistance is simply inherent in the nature of power or of language (Butler, 1997), but the conditions favourable to the exploitation of these windows of opportunity for personal and social transformation are never interrogated. (*Feminist Theory* 2000)

While Butler's association with Foucault (and less commonly, in fact, Derrida) confer authority in Western feminist progress narratives, this same repeated association positions her as a dependent in loss and return narratives. Butler's lamentable abstraction and lack of attention to social conditions are thus understood to derive from familiar male influence. All

three narrative strands reproduce the same vision of Butler's intellectual development, and all frame this development as produced though her proximity to her male antecedents. When positively inflected, this relation propels feminism into a more nuanced era; when negatively inflected, this dependency overwhelms other (feminist) considerations. Whether celebrated, lamented, or derided, hetero-citation of Butler's intellectual debts uncouples feminism from poststructuralism and leaves the former mired in the past or in a future on the other side of poststructuralism, when feminists may be brave enough to think for themselves.

My characterization of the pairing of Butler and Foucault as hetero-citational practice within Western feminist theory is, of course, intended somewhat ironically. Foucault is not a poststructuralist male antecedent like any other,[7] but one so thoroughly associated with queer theory as to be its veritable, venerable daddy.[8] It is not any old poststructuralism that Butler is sutured to in this association, but a poststructuralism that places sexuality at the discursive centre of both modernity and our own contemporary interpretations of the same. The citational repetition of Foucault-and-Butler in Western feminist accounts of progress, loss, and return thus cannot be understood to provide a straightforwardly male poststructuralist history to her work, but importantly, underlines that this is a *queer* poststructuralist history, as the following examples make plain:

> First, there emerged a genre of scholarship, inspired by the work of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, particularly queer theory, which explored new aspects and dimensions of the socially constructed, performative character of gender and sexuality. (*Nora* 2003)

> Influenced especially by Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, feminists, along with queer theorists, now deconstructed the sex/gender distinction by arguing that not only is gender socially constituted, but sex is too. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2000)[9]

Situating Foucault as chief precursor to Butler's new deconstruction of feminist epistemological presumption isolates the latter from feminism in two ways, then. The first, delineated above, is in the instantiation of a male poststructuralist history that runs parallel to the feminism it critically transforms but is not a part of nor turned by. The second, suggested here, concerns the designation of that history as queer and thus also as crucially *not feminist*. As discussed throughout part 1, the dominant narratives of

Western feminist storytelling view Butler's critique of the sex/gender distinction as a contest between discrete investments in sexual politics or feminism, and never as a continuation of debates about the relationship between these fused arenas of inquiry. In progress narratives, Butler's queer critique—via Foucault—allows for an expansion of feminism beyond its myopic essentialist concerns. In loss and return narratives, Butler's queer critique—via Foucault—constitutes a lamentable interruption of a feminist politics, one recuperable only through a subsequent rejection of sexuality and culture as viable critical vantage points. In effect, the citation of Butler's Foucault as the thorn in feminism's critical and political side is also a key technique through which the opposition between sexuality and gender, discussed at some length in the last chapter, too, is chronologically imagined and maintained.

The pairing of Foucault and Butler sticks ontologically as well as epistemologically or historiographically, exceeding textual citation. It sticks to Foucault in ways that are familiar from existing arguments that question the amenability of his theoretical and political accounts of the subject and the social to feminism (e.g., Hartsock 1990; Ramazanoğlu and Holland 1993). In these texts, many of which emerge around the same time as Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990), Foucault's lack of explicit attention to gender relations is presented as evidence of the limits of his approach to power for feminism overall, whether or not his work is otherwise understood as productive or interesting (see Sawicki 1991; Bordo 1993). In such accounts, it is often Foucault's maleness that is called up in order to explain that lack of direct attention, a process that fuses femaleness and feminism, and interestingly for us here, brackets out any difference Foucault's "queerness" might itself make to our sense of what maleness is or does. In the patterns of citation within Western feminist stories that I am concerned with, citation of Foucault as singular antecedent to Butler underwrites her position as transformative or dismissive of feminism in a doubled sense. Foucault's maleness stands in for "male poststructuralism" more generally, anchoring Butler to the parallel teleology I have been tracing, while Foucault's queerness provides a further layer to Butler's betrayal, re-emphasizing her allegiance to sexuality over feminism. In the process, Foucault's influence can only ever be imagined as disruptive, as a kind of viral incommensurability that precipitates a strangely passive Butler into acting counter to her and feminist theory's own best interests.

The ontological becoming of Butler through this citational process is concomitantly crucial to the separation of queer theory and feminism in Western feminist stories. Both as "the first" to critique feminism and as "the one" to carry the burden for poststructuralist, queer interruption of materialist feminist concerns, Butler's pairing with Foucault forces her out of feminism proper. As I have argued above, this works by drawing a theoretical strand from poststructuralism to queer theory, a strand represented as parallel to or intersecting with, but never fully part of, feminist theory. In both progress and loss narratives Butler's citational association with Foucault propels her beyond feminism, or marks her as nonfeminist. She is, as I have been arguing, textually masculinized, forced to choose Foucault again and again over other potential alliances.[10] Butler's textual masculinity can only be either asexual (moving feminism beyond sexual difference, "wrenching" sex from the body), or gay male (throwing in with the boys). The kind of textual masculinity offered to Butler is not that of Halberstam's female masculinity (1998), and its potential gayness not a version of Sedgwick's female anality (1987), but a closed effect of the limited narrative choice on offer between femaleness and maleness. In this respect, the "odd couple" Foucault and Butler make might better be understood as "hom(m)o-citational" rather than hetero-citational.[11] In its repetition, this hom(m)o-citation may have parodic effects in that it has the potential to expose the heteronormative and generational presumptions at the heart of dominant feminist historiography. But even this playful representation of Butler and Foucault's relationship cannot shift one of the primary exclusions marked by this dominant citation practice. In the citational coincidence of male and queer poststructuralism, representation of Butler as feminist queer, indeed lesbian queer, remains a contradiction in terms.

CITATION TACTICS

One reasonable response to this dulling of Foucault's and Butler's separate or combined significance for Western feminist theory would be to suggest that this kind of flattening is bound to occur with representations of theoretical super-stardom and to advocate a move away from their fetishization altogether. Feminist writers have consistently argued against the instantiation of a "star system" (e.g., Ahmed 2000b), on the grounds that it re-

produces rather than challenges institutionalized knowledge production, reducing what counts as feminist theory or practice in the process. The first issue of the interdisciplinary U.K.-based journal *Feminist Theory* included a thematic section devoted to challenging common conceptions of what feminist theory is and who produces or practices it.[12] Further, Liz Stanley and Sue Wise argue that the star system in academic feminism is something that "jobbing academic feminists" (2000: 275) are complicit in. Its reproduction is something that we actively participate and invest in, to problematic effect. Perhaps then, as Rachel Torr suggests in her critical response to my own work on this question, we should disinvest in Butler, Spivak, and Haraway, rather than focusing on them still further, and seek instead to build a more egalitarian history of feminist theory (2007: 11–12).

It might be possible to interpret my citation tactics so far in the book as making a similar point. In citing context over author, I am clearly privileging conditions of production and collective practices over individual argument, success, or failure. I have taken this tack on the basis of histories and fantasies as shared within feminist academic production rather than belonging to particular writers. If we combine this approach with my critique of the citation of key figures in Western feminist stories as part of what enables the separation of feminism and poststructuralism, which in turn instantiates the shared fantasy of feminism as lost and particular individuals as responsible, then we might expect an additional move on my part. We might expect advocacy of citation of the obscure, of the hidden, as central to a history of feminism that can stand as a viable alternative to the privileging of the few, not in the sense of the provision of a singular alternative history that will produce a more faithful and correct feminist account, but as a way of introducing a range of other histories that are currently unavailable. This would be an interesting and provocative approach, but perhaps one that would nevertheless be likely to slip into endorsement of particular authors for future stardom. But still, why focus on representations of Butler, citation of her theoretical influences, and her role in the telling of Western feminist stories? Why not continue to think through Western feminist theory as a set of common practices, secured through particular techniques, best addressed without recourse to fetishistic author designation?

In part, the answer is that this project is driven less by egalitarianism

and more by the desire for feminist approaches that are accountable for their narrative amenability. My journal citation tactics are less about diffusing individuality (though this may be one effect, and one I am pleased with in our era of inane citation chasing), and more about the clearest way of getting to the shared politics of narrative form. In this sense, insofar as citation of Butler has emerged as a key critical tactic to ensure narrative coherence within the overlapping strands of Western feminist storytelling, my interest is in *amplifying* the resonances of her citation, rather than downplaying the same. Butler is invoked time and again in passing statements about what has happened in Western feminist theory, whether the history produced is otherwise brimming with positive or negative affect. She serves as the heroine or antiheroine in these chronologies, yet is, as I have indicated in this chapter thus far, also separated out from that history in significant ways. Citation of Butler, as I have elaborated, allows feminism to be anachronistic in all the narratives I have been mapping; her textual presence is pivotal rather than peripheral to this process. Citation of Butler is essential to the culture/materiality divide, to arguments about fragmentation or diversification of feminism, to oppositions between sexual and critical race politics, and to the affective sense of what has gone wrong or right in the last thirty to forty years of academic feminist institutionalization. In short, a focus on representations of Butler seems essential to revealing techniques through which Western feminist theory reproduces its narrative momentum. Attention to her citation may, by virtue of its repetition, offer a way into the fabric of these narratives, may open up the condensed meanings and histories folded into and carried by this textual fixation.[13] And in my discussion of the curious coupling of Butler with Foucault, I hope I have already begun to suggest ways in which such attention might reveal more about Western feminist theory's investments than mere refutation alone might do. Utopian egalitarianism may in the end leave the politics of the present intact.

My interest in Butler's citation also goes beyond the desire to establish what might be happening when she is cited, though it certainly is that. The analysis of her association with Foucault has highlighted how and why Butler is left stranded within a parallel poststructuralist linearity, forced into inheriting a singularly male, queer history, into bearing primary textual responsibility for feminism's demise. But such citation of Butler also has an *ontological impact,* as I began to indicate above. By ontological

impact, I do not mean what or how Butler signifies in and of herself, but how her citation restricts where and how she signifies and determines the conditions under which "her person" is cited intertextually and over time. I am not prepared, it turns out, to leave Butler mired in this history, and indeed, I also want to resist Foucault's animation in our narratives as mere liberating or domesticating influence on feminism. This means both that I am not prepared to leave this couple alone and that showcasing and analysing the significance of Butler's citation for Western feminist progress, loss, and return narratives is enough. The identification of hetero-citation or hom(m)o-citation as techniques does not enable either character to signify differently. Instead, I want to propose an approach that starts from what is made impossible, what is obscured in making Butler exceptional in Western feminist storytelling. Which other possible histories and presents are precluded by representing her as breaking with her feminist antecedents? What difference might it make to start from these absences, to start again from this motivated refusal, but without replacing Butler as a central character in narratives of progress, loss, and return?

Or perhaps I should more accurately say, *my refusal*; I should more accurately say that such citation has intersubjective rather than simply ontological impact. I am, once again, not a neutral observer of these histories and citation practices, but someone who has vested interest in challenging them, and these investments are brought to the text rather than only being produced in the moment of reading. I do not want to leave Butler stranded in a history that reduces her theoretical resonance, in part because this reduction does not fit with my own reading of her, my own reading history. When Butler is tied to Foucault in ways I have suggested, what are erased are not only alternative readings of the two of them, including readings of their own association, but other citational threads that move back and forth across Western feminist history. It is not just Butler whose relationship to feminist theory and practice is thus compromised, but my own coming to feminist theory through *Gender Trouble* (1990), which drew together feminist theories of sexuality and gender and linked so well to the radical lesbian feminist or anti-psychoanalytic texts I had otherwise been reading. In my graduate student readings of the early 1990s, Butler creatively developed Monique Wittig's (1980; 1982; 1985)[14] critiques of heterosexuality as the framing condition of sex/gender distinctions, and her reading of Wittig seemed to echo my own disagreement

with what I then thought of as Wittig's certainty that the answer to the problem of heteronormativity was lesbianism.[15] And what of Luce Irigaray (1985a; 1985b), the champion of the sceptical reading and of loving attention to the disagreed-with text, and the anxiety about what came to be thought of as her essentialism?[16]

It came as no surprise to me then (or now) that the feminist philosophers Butler strikes up a critical conversation with in *Gender Trouble* are Wittig and Irigaray, and no surprise that she folds Lacan and Foucault into the discussion. What I find utterly discordant is how Wittig and Irigaray remain virtually unremembered in citation of Butler's primary antecedents in the Western feminist narratives of progress, loss, and return I have been interrogating.[17] In the particular glosses I have been concerned with, psychoanalytic tracks are less visible (neither Lacan nor Irigaray are very evident), since this would interrupt the materiality/culture opposition central to Western feminist storytelling in quite a different way.[18] Irigaray haunts narratives of progress, loss, and return in this respect, but as one who has been cast out, only to be recuperated in return narratives that emphasize embodiment over epistemology. But the lack of citation of Wittig as a primary influence on Butler is a forgetting of rather a different order. Given that Butler is cited as providing "the first" feminist critique of sex/gender from a *queer* perspective, the absence of Wittig in this frame looms large in the present. In my reading her deflection is essential to sexuality's and materiality's incommensurability and to the understanding of a queer trajectory as parallel to, rather than overlapping, co-extensive, or emergent in dialogue with, feminism. In other words, citation of Butler's primary affiliate as Foucault both reduces his contributions as suggested and enables the erasure of a particular kind of lesbian history from Western feminist storytelling. In return narratives, too, lack of citation of Wittig (compared to Irigaray) ensures that the materialism advocated remains a socialist or even sexual difference theory, rather than a lesbian materialism.

And so I do not want to leave Butler stranded at, constituting even, the border between poststructuralism and feminism, for rather complicated reasons. I do not want to leave her there because I want her to be able to signify a different history or histories, not one that leaves (lesbian) feminism behind. Neither do I want my own reading history to be erased. But this reading history is not *only* a question of personal motivation. It is

frustration that leads me to ask a series of questions about Butler's citation in Western feminist storytelling—frustration at the burden she is given and that, perhaps, I feel implicated into sharing—and joy, or the memory of it, that allows me to piece together another way of tracing Butler's resonance across, rather than tangential to, feminism. These twinned affects are both brought to the text, but they are felt in the process of reading. Starting from such investment seems one useful way of teasing out what might be textually sidelined, yet affectively present, in narratives of progress, loss, and return. In this respect my own reading history—the one I see still writ large in *Gender Trouble*—operates itself as a kind of haunting of the narratives I otherwise participate in. It operates, I want to argue, as a way of renarrating these stories from the starting point of my earlier comment that "[i]n the citational coincidence of male and queer poststructuralism, representation of Butler as feminist queer, indeed lesbian queer, remains a contradiction in terms" (175).

What new ways of telling stories might emerge if we refuse to accept this citational separation, and starting from affect and memory, we recite those traces of the past that echo still in the present? Instead of asking "Where has Wittig gone?," instead of remaining frustrated by her absence, I want to ask what happens when we invite Wittig back, what joys and unremembered sorrows re-surface when we bring her out of the shadows and into the spotlight?

RECITATION

Recitation: reading aloud of something; reciting of something, from memory; revisiting material previously encountered (review); un-forgetting.[19]

Thus far my citation tactics have been concerned to highlight the importance of citation practices in securing the dominant narratives of Western feminist storytelling and to identify potent absences, hauntings in the shadows of these narratives that cannot be consigned fully to the past. The next step is to "recite" these stories starting from the affective investments I approach the text from, and that are activated by my reading process, as suggested above. For this approach not to be a mere prioritization of a different, but nevertheless singular, history, the attention needs to be firmly placed on what happens when we fold what haunts these stories back into them, making visible what is, importantly, *already there*. To fold

what is almost-but-not-quite forgotten back in is a process that inquires after obscured dimensions of the present, rather than one that seeks an alternative history to replace those that are dominant now. Haunting, for Avery Gordon, never simply references the death of one possibility, but also a "seething presence" in the present (1997: 8), or as Victoria Hesford interprets Gordon, an "echo of a potentially different social or political experience" (2005: 229). Recitation is partly an adaptation of some of the more familiar literary liberties taken by, among others, Jean Rhys in *The Wide Sargasso Sea* (Rhys 2000 [1966]), J. M. Coetzee in *Foe* (Coetzee 1987), and more recently Joan Anim-Addo in *Imoinda* (Anim-Addo 2003), in which the potent absences or half-presences in the original text become central in their rewriting. Recitation in the context of feminist theory is thus not the telling of a new story, but a renarration of the same story from a different perspective.[20] It operates as a breaking open of the presumed relation between the past and the present, rather than an instantiation of a new, fixed relation between the two. I visualize recitation, then, as an intervention, a mode of engagement that values the past by understanding it affectively and politically rather than in terms of finality.

To begin this experiment in renarration, I want to mobilize "Monique Wittig" as my point of entry in reciting passages that overdetermine the separation of feminism from poststructuralism, and sexuality from materiality. As suggested above, I have chosen Wittig because folding her influence back into Butler's citation follows the tracks opened up by my own frustration at the erasure of the lesbian feminist history of materialist sexual politics. Further, that erasure is a pertinent one, without which the positioning of Butler as "the first" to critique the category "woman" would not make sense. In addition, this choice reflects the ambivalent position of *lesbian feminism* in Western feminist storytelling more generally, an ambivalence I have identified through the mapping that comprises Part I of this book. But my choice of Wittig also raises important questions about accountability. Wittig is a *particular* lesbian feminist and should not be understood to stand in for lesbian feminism in general.[21] My choice of Wittig over Gayle Rubin, Pat(rick) Califia, or Audre Lorde, for example, produces a particular kind of lesbian recitation of Western feminist storytelling. But while acknowledging the ways in which recitation is bound to produce its own exclusions that need attention, I also want to be clear that the choice of Wittig, while certainly partial, is not random. In addition to

the reasons suggested above, I have chosen Wittig for this experiment because of her central presence in *Gender Trouble*. Engagement with Wittig occupies Butler for as many pages as her engagement with Foucault in this text, and indeed, she is respectful and critical to both of them (and others). Lorde is not mentioned, however, and Rubin only briefly. To be concerned with the politics of the present (rather than historical absence), recitation must start from potent hauntings, not from arbitrary or more general political juxtaposition. In this respect, Wittig is not one choice among a infinite number.

Let us turn to what recitation in this context can achieve, then. Recitation requires reintroducing the original example in each case, and then reinterpreting it through that substitution. In straightforward terms, what this tactic effects is a disruption of a chronology in which Butler comes before other feminist theorists, a disruption of the framing of Butler as "the first" to offer critiques of the epistemological and ontological grounding of feminism in the category "woman." Let us look again at one of the extracts quoted earlier:

> Feminists inspired by, among others, Michel Foucault, however, have questioned this understanding of feminism as critique with reference to Foucault's arguments for the existence of an immanent relation between power and knowledge. Judith Butler, for instance, thus understands feminist critique as a theoretical exercise that is always already implicated in the very relations of power it seeks to adjudicate (Butler 1995b, 139). (*Nora* 2004)[22]

And let us recite this as: "Feminists inspired by, among others, Monique Wittig, however, have questioned this understanding of feminism as critique with reference to her arguments for the existence of an immanent relation between power and knowledge." The first thing to say about this recitation is that it functions as a kind of joke, a rendering of the past as unnatural, an opening up of the original text to allow us briefly to glimpse a different history that emerges in the retelling. But further than that the recitation describes something plausible, provides a different history that resonates with what feminist theorists already know: that Wittig, among others, does indeed highlight the relation between knowledge and power within feminism. Now, in the second sentence of our recitation, Butler takes up a particular strand of feminism to suggest that feminist critique is implicated in the "relations of power" it is caught within. She does this

because of Wittig not Foucault, because of prior feminist theory that was concerned with the relationship between power and knowledge. Interestingly, here, the "among others" of Wittig, and the "for instance" of Butler, make more textual sense than in the original because the frames of reference have shifted to concern *varieties* of feminist theory. To think of Butler as not only having male antecedents, then, not only shifts our sense of Butler's history, but also allows us to think of Western feminist theory as more multiple, without having to specify a singular alternative.

Employing these citation tactics to re-read similar glosses reinforces this sense of an opening up of feminist possibility, rather than a closing down of the same. What is challenged is the presumed separation between feminism and poststructuralism that the repeated suturing of Butler to Foucault otherwise effects. We can reorient ourselves to Western feminist theory as having a complex history, one that draws on multiple traditions. Thus, to return to a different extract:

> Foucault and Butler and the influence of discourses of race have served to make many scholars wary of the categories man and woman, for fear of the "sin" of essentialism, of assuming a pre-formed individual identity. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2000)

To recite this as "Wittig and Butler and the influence of discourses of race have served to make many scholars wary of the categories of man and women, for fear of the 'sin' of essentialism, of assuming a pre-formed individual identity" effects a number of changes to the political grammar of Western feminist theory. In the first instance, we see a combined critique of essentialism that runs across feminism and links it to "other" scholars similarly "wary." Butler is no longer the one who breaks with or single-handedly transforms feminism; she is positioned as part of a tradition within and beyond feminism. This mode of recitation allows feminism to hold those who critique it within its terrain; it represents a thoughtful, reflexive feminism that changes incrementally and unevenly rather than though seismic shifts and generational rejections. This is significant because it challenges the representation of feminist theory as a linear history of progress or loss (and so the return) and suggests that feminist theories also act upon other traditions, rather than remaining passively acted upon, as hetero- or hom(m)o-citation practice would have it.

My experiments have also indicated that recitation via Wittig may not

only have such affirmative effects. It may not only represent a generous, open vision of a feminist past and present otherwise stultified. In the above example, introducing different protagonists does not alter the implied chastisement of those wary of the "fear of the 'sin' of essentialism." If the extract is read as a lament, it is one that cannot disentangle feminist theory from the burden of this "fear." The "void . . . at the heart of Butler's notion of politics," in Nussbaum's words (1999), is not necessarily filled because of Butler's connection to other possible histories of Western feminist theory; "the void" may simply have a longer feminist history. In particular, in narratives of loss or return that see Butler's attachment and proximity to Foucault as problematic, the negative affect is not necessarily altered because of a reanimation of Wittig's significance. For example, let us consider the following extract introduced earlier:

> For Butler, on the authority of Foucault and Derrida respectively, the possibility of resistance is simply inherent in the nature of power or of language (Butler, 1997), but the conditions favourable to the exploitation of these windows of opportunity for personal and social transformation are never interrogated. (*Feminist Theory* 2000)

To recite with "the authority of Wittig and Irigaray respectively" does not alter the extract's suggestion that Butler fails to interrogate "conditions favourable to the exploitation of these windows of opportunity." Indeed, it extends this failure as a characteristic of feminist theory that Butler inherits, rather than as a problem that can be deflected onto a parallel or interrupting trajectory. This in itself is an interesting effect of my feminist recitation here: it makes it difficult to isolate poststructuralism as that which has prevented or obscured a previous feminist political capacity, and thus challenges narratives of return as well as loss. The situation may be worse than subjects of loss and return narratives believe: there may be no prior materiality untainted by abstraction to return to. Instead, feminist recitation situates the problem of political transformation as a *continued feature* of feminist theory that nostalgia for a unified era is misplaced within.

Thus, in a similar vein, recitation via Wittig alters how Western feminist narratives of progress and loss isolate abstraction as a sign of *increasing* feminist depoliticization. The excerpt below makes this transformation particularly clear:

Possibly because of its difficult task of dislodging commonly held assumptions, possibly because of the influence of Foucault and Derrida, recondite abstractions characterize postmodernist feminist theory in general and Butler's books in particular. (*Critical Inquiry* 1998)[23]

To recite the extract as "possibly because of the influence of Wittig and Irigaray, recondite abstractions characterize postmodern feminist theory in general and Butler's books in particular" provides a pleasing (to me at least) reorientation of our understanding of when and where abstraction in theory belongs. Here then, feminist recitation realigns postmodernism and feminism as abstract allies rather than always at odds. Indeed, one might suggest that this recitation allows for a repositioning of feminist theory at the heart of postmodernism rather than as marginal or opposed to it. This recitation resonates because of what haunts the present that would narrate Western feminist theory otherwise: the importance of abstraction in terms of feminist epistemological development, in the ability to imagine otherwise, as well as in the engagement with the importance of the systemic. Again, despite the tone of lament in the extract, the loss cannot be situated chronologically. Recitation in this vein thus resists a generational approach that safeguards the certainty of the feminist subject in the present.

In this reframing—of Western feminist theory as consistent in its concern with abstraction, with the relations between language, power, and politics, however valued—critique of Butler ceases to be a call for the reinstantiation of an imagined era of feminism before abstraction, but an engagement with ongoing traditions within rather than outside of feminism. To further expand this point, let us recite the following:

Recently there have been a number of constructive critiques of Butler's Foucauldian concept of power. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2002)

The extract now reads: "Recently there have been a number of constructive critiques of Butler's Wittigian concept of power." This particular recitation propels a number of resonant reconsiderations. At one level, it suggests simply that "constructive critiques" of Butler are also critiques of a model of power she adapts from Wittig: the critique is thus again of a feminist tradition, rather than of Butler's Foucauldian roots. At another level, of course, the presence of Wittig in the text alters the way we read Butler and the nature of the critique that we assume is taking place. Butler may be being assessed for her reliance on Wittigian materialist feminist frames, for

example, or Wittig may herself be being revisited as less materialist than we might at first have assumed. In Butler's attachment to Wittig the meaning of both figures is as transformed as is the accepted sense of what has happened in Western feminist theory. The recitation via Wittig in this passage (as in others) relies on plausible resonance, yes, but it also precipitates an uncertainty about what precisely the trajectory is that is being criticized. Feminist recitation thus allows us not only to revalue what haunts the feminist present, but also to rethink how the threads of the past come together. We might not be able to be sure that we have wholly gained or wholly lost something; we might need a politics of contextualization as well as conviction.

As suggested in my discussion about the choice of an alternative to Foucault in this experiment, my playful Wittig-Butler romance brings to the surface a resonant lesbian history to feminist debates about the relationships among sex, gender, and sexuality. Such a history contrasts with those that see critiques of heteronormativity as interruptions to the history of Western feminist theory, and, importantly for me, ones that hold sexual and material analyses forever apart. Let us explore further some of the lesbian feminist resonances that arise when we recite Butler via Wittig. To return to another extract included earlier:

> Influenced especially by Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, feminists, along with queer theorists, now deconstructed the sex/gender distinction by arguing that not only is gender socially constituted, but sex is too. (*Australian Feminist Studies* 2000)

This passage now reads as: "Influenced especially by Wittig's *The Straight Mind*, feminists, along with queer theorists, now deconstructed the sex/gender distinction by arguing that not only is gender socially constituted, but sex is too." As with several feminist recitations above, this renarration makes perfect sense. Both Wittig and Butler (whose presence is implicit intertextually) do indeed make the claim that "sex" is socially constructed, and both theorists foreground the importance of what Butler comes to call "the heterosexual matrix" as the epistemological and political context for that insight. In this sense my feminist recitation resituates sexuality at the heart of a feminist commitment to social constructionist critique. In addition, recitation also emphasizes the relationship between queer theory and this history of feminist critique, reminding us of the contingent nature of

sexual politics Wittig is here seen to inaugurate. Queer theory and feminism are thus themselves paired to reinflect a Western feminist history that otherwise frames the former as an abandonment of the latter.

Since Wittig creatively combines lesbian sexual politics with Marxist dialectics in her own work, feminist recitation of her relationship with Butler and feminist/queer poststructuralism more generally refigures the presumed opposition between sexuality (as culture) and materiality (as oppression) so central to Western feminist loss and return narratives.[24] Recitation reinserts a history of materiality into the heart of feminist concerns with sexual identity and politics. Butler's repeated citation as moving away from materiality through a concern with representation and performativity or parody is thus revisited if we insist on the Wittigian influence in her work:

> From a Foucauldian perspective, the making of the gendered self, or gender identity, is the product of disciplinary practices of the body that ensure the reproduction of heterosexuality as the norm. The body is seen as material that is enrolled in the production of gender rather than as providing the biological foundation for gender differences (Butler, 1993; Grosz, 1994). (*Body and Society* 2002)

In the recitation—"From a Wittigian perspective, the making of the gendered self, or gender identity, is the product of disciplinary practices of the body that ensure the reproduction of heterosexuality as the norm"—Butler and Grosz, so often antagonists in loss and return narratives, take up the lesbian feminist tradition of investigating the relationship of sexuality to the body, its regulation and relationship to social practices of gendering. Sexual politics thus becomes one way materiality is thought through by feminists, rather than a central reason materiality has been abandoned. I have already spent considerable time in the book pointing out the limits of this separation of sexuality and materiality, and some of its problematic effects. Recitation points here to the importance of insisting on sexual meaning outside of a culture/materiality split as part of what makes feminist theory well positioned to challenge (rather than reproduce) that discursive opposition.

In these experiments with recitation, then, Wittig is repositioned as a precursor to poststructuralist feminist concerns with sex, gender, and sexuality rather than as antithetical to them. The particular haunting I am

tracing not only concerns the materialist history of queer poststructuralism, but also the lesbian character of materialist feminism. Citation of Butler as not engaged in ongoing feminist materialist debates both rubs out whole sections of *Gender Trouble* (the book seems to shrink before our very eyes) and isolates Wittig within a desexualized materialist tradition. Putting Wittig back into Western feminist storytelling is thus to change the history of materiality too, to challenge the framing of feminist interest in materiality as a "return," and to insist that sexuality and materiality may be linked other than through harm alone.[25] They may be, *they are*, linked through a history of feminist theory that cannot think properly about social and political transformation without the inclusion of lesbian figurations and histories.

There are limits to what this practice of feminist recitation can renarrate, of course. Let us take two examples where substituting Wittig for Foucault does not, in my view, resonate as effectively as the examples discussed above:

> One especially revealing feature of Butler's style is the preponderance of subject-verb disagreements. I want to speculate that this penchant, by reflecting the difficulty of sustaining a Foucauldian critique of the singular self and the biological body, reveals the tensions continually at play in efforts to combine poststructuralism with feminism. (*Critical Inquiry* 1998)

> During the 1980s and 90s the concepts of patriarchy and feminism gradually disappeared from women's studies and gender research in the Nordic countries. Instead, many researchers took inspiration from discourse theory, especially from the works of Michel Foucault. (*Nora* 2004)

In the first extract a renarration with Butler's "subject-verb disagreements . . . reflecting the difficulty of sustaining a Wittigian critique of the singular self" does not make sense, since Wittig does not present such a critique. In the second extract it would be similarly meaningless to suggest that Wittig's discourse theory influenced researchers, since again Wittig does not develop discourse theory in her work. It is precisely when the nature of a particular theoretical tradition (Butler's or Foucault's) is specified rather than invoked that recitation is put under the most strain. Indeed, perhaps it is simply not necessary in these cases, because it is a particular rather than a generic comparison that is being made.

That strain points in another direction too. It highlights the limits of

substitution *per se* as the basis of narrative recitation that is the direct replacement of Foucault with Wittig, when Foucault may indeed be an appropriate figure. Let us look at the following extract:

> First, there emerged a genre of scholarship, inspired by the work of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, particularly queer theory, which explored new aspects and dimensions of the socially constructed, performative character of gender and sexuality. (*Nora* 2003)

To read Wittig for Foucault here reconfigures feminism and queer theory as co-operative rather than discrete theoretical traditions, and is thus useful in similar ways to those suggested thus far. But this process of recitation is not intended to excise Foucault from a queer tradition, and this is a danger with my experiment so far. Foucault himself becomes the haunting presence hovering over the privileged coupling of Wittig and Butler, and although a vision of Foucault as displaced "third wheel" to the dominant relation may itself be pleasingly generative of a rather different historiography, it is perhaps a displacement too far. The limit to recitation in these extracts reminds us that the purpose of feminist recitation is not simple substitution, of course. It does not represent the resolution of a competition for primacy between Foucault and Wittig in claiming Butler's attentions, but a laying bare of what is at stake in the critical certainty that Butler's primary affiliate is (always) Foucault. Feminist recitation can produce a temporary break in accepted narratives of Western feminist theory, but it cannot—and should not—be conceived of as settled alternative.[26]

CONCLUSION

These final reflections on the feminist recitation process return me to the question of my choice of Wittig in the retelling of Western feminist stories. I hope I have situated this choice as a motivated one that emerges from my mapping of Western feminist storytelling thus far, and one that seeks to make particular rather than general erasures visible. I hope, too, that my experiment—the recitation of citation practices central to narrative function within these stories, in order to remind myself, and readers, of other resonant histories and interpretations—has struck a chord. The potential permanent erasure of Foucault's presence within Western feminist storytelling has further confirmed for me the importance of recitation as a

reflexive approach, however, rather than as a proposition for an alternative history in which Wittig herself may become fixed, cast in resin, placed in a museum to be viewed as the more authentic historical antecedent to Butler. As Elizabeth Grosz pertinently notes: "The past is never exhausted in its vitalities, insofar as it is always capable of giving rise to another reading, another context, another framework that will animate it in different ways" (2000: 1020). As a practice, then, feminist recitation starts from affectively invested erasures in order to reveal possibilities for thinking the past and present differently. The process is one that is intended to open up and foreground absence, provide a break in the monotony of the repeated, and suggest other historiographies that are politically and theoretically transparent.

That transparency is the most illusive aspect of recitation in my undertaking; I believe it is also the most important. As discussed, the choice of Wittig in my feminist recitation experiment is not accidental. She represents my interest in folding histories of lesbian feminism back into Western feminist storytelling, histories whose haunting is most tangible in the attempts in progress, loss, and return narratives to reduce sexuality to culture and oppose it to "feminism proper." Recitation of Wittig forces a renarration of materialist feminism with sexuality at its heart and animates accounts of poststructuralism as sutured to, not separate from, feminism. My choice of Wittig allows me to combine a political and theoretical commitment to thinking sexuality and feminist studies together again, and at the same time forces me to locate myself within the narratives I re-read. Starting from my own frustration and remembered pleasure is a process that allows me at once to illuminate and interrupt the potent erasures that I have been tracking and to begin the archaeological work necessary to create a fuller picture of the possible meanings of sexuality within feminist, social, and cultural theory. I think these recitations matter, because they provide a break from the claustrophobic assumption that feminism is anachronistic, has been left behind, is dead and buried. Importantly, they provide a renarration via feminist traces present in these dominant narratives already. They are grounded and fanciful alternatives. They ask us to refresh our memories and allow ourselves to be turned.